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PREFACE

THIS volume is the ninth edition of a work which has been for some years out of print. Its republication has been delayed in order to give time for careful reconsideration of the whole subject. The whole has been rewritten; and embodies the writer's mature thought about the greatest work of the greatest of the apostles of Christ.

My purpose in writing and rewriting is identical with that of the epistle annotated, as I understand it, viz. to set before the readers the Gospel of Christ as Paul understood it, in order that by intelligent faith they may embrace, or embrace more fully, the salvation announced by Christ, and thus find in Him eternal life: cp. Jno. xx. 31. In other words, my aim has been to bridge over nineteen centuries and to place modern English readers as nearly as possible in the position of those who first heard the epistle read at Rome.

It is therefore a contribution to Doctrinal Theology: for Paul wrote in order to set before the Christians at Rome an orderly, and within its limits complete, account of the Gospel. But it is in nowise dogmatic: for my statements and arguments rest, not on authority, but on evidence adduced. My aim has been simply to learn and reproduce Paul's own rational conception of Christ and the Gospel. And this is the highest aim of all Biblical research. This volume is also a contribution to Christian Evidences. For Paul wrote and argued in order to produce and strengthen in his readers an intelligent conviction of the truth of the Gospel: and I have endeavoured to reproduce and estimate his arguments.

Whatever is needful for these ends, I have, to the best of my ability, done. I have adduced decisive proof that this letter actually came from the pen of Paul; and that it is fairly reproduced, as he wrote it, in our modern copies, English and Greek. Where the ancient copies differ so as to affect theological teaching, and where serious doubt exists as to the true reading, I have discussed the difference, as in chs. iii. 28, v. 1, viii. 11. I have also carefully discussed the meaning and associations of thought of the words and phrases of the epistle. These are of utmost importance, as the very alphabet of theology. In the more important cases, the results of this study are embodied in separate notes. I have also endeavoured to trace the apostle's line of thought and argument, which I have embodied in frequent recapitulations. Throughout the work, I have sought for the general theological conceptions underlying the epistle. This is needful even for correct exposition; for only in the light of a writer's general conceptions can we understand his language. Moreover the thoughts of Paul, as expressed in his epistles, are one chief avenue of approach to the actual teaching of Christ and to the eternal realities underlying His Gospel. The results of this study, I have embodied in dissertations at the close of this volume.

My chief aid has been careful grammatical study of the Greek text. But it was needless to reprint it: for each student will use his own copy of the Greek Testament or English Bible. The English translation here given was needful in order to explain to scholars how I interpret Paul's Greek words, and to give to all readers a consecutive text of the epistle. Although the whole work is based on the Greek text, there has been little need for Greek type: for all scholars will recognise my constant reference to the original. This will make my work more helpful to many intelligent men and women who are eager to follow as closely as possible the teaching of Paul but are not familiar with the niceties of Greek grammar. Where the Greek construction is difficult

and important, it has been carefully discussed; as in chs. v. 1, vii. 21, ix. 5: and occasionally, e.g. on pp. 30, 132, I have discussed the meaning of Greek particles.

My aim has led me to give special attention to the doctrinal contents of the epistle, to the broad theological principles which underlay the thought of Paul, and to the historic facts and eternal realities which underlie the Christian faith. This explains the notes on pp. 65f, 113f, 119f, the note on Election on pp. 279–82, and the careful argument in Diss. i. The whole work is a study in theology at the feet of the great apostle.

In the Grammar of the New Testament, there has been comparatively little progress since the epoch-making work of Winer, first published in 1822, and re-edited in a seventh edition, after his death, by Lünemann in 1867: a recent edition by Schmiedel. We have however an attractive and able *Grammar of New Testament Greek* by Blass, published in 1896, and in English by Thackeray in 1898; also a most scholarly volume on *New Testament Moods and Tenses* by De Witt Burton of Chicago. This last is specially good on the meaning and use of the Greek Aorist.

Of modern commentaries, I may still mention those of Fritzsche, 1836-43, and De Wette, 4th ed. 1847, scholarly and accurate expositions, but almost forgotten now. Still more valuable is the great commentary of Meyer, 5th ed. 1872, which is still, as Meyer left it, in my view on the whole the best exposition of the Epistle to the Romans.

Of commentaries published since the first appearance of this work in 1877, I may mention that of Godet, published in 1879, '80, marked by keen insight into the apostle's meaning and great charm of style, but not always reliable in grammatical and critical details; and that of Oltramare, published in 1881, '82, careful and scholarly, especially in grammar, but, as I think, less in harmony with the thought of Paul. These works we owe to French Switzerland, their writers having been professors at Lausanne and Geneva respectively.

In 1881 appeared the sober and careful, rather than original, exposition of Gifford in *The Speaker's Commentary*. Somewhat earlier, in 1879, came Moule's attractive exposition in the *Cambridge Bible for Schools*; and this was followed in 1894 by a profitable and spiritual volume by the same author in *The Expositor's Bible*. More recently, in 1895 was published a very attractive and scholarly volume in *The International Critical Commentary* by Sanday and Headlam, a valuable addition to the literature of the subject, but, like the others just mentioned, rather a careful reproduction of the work of others than an original exposition. I notice with interest that these last editors accept, if I correctly understand them, my exposition of Rom. v. 1, an exposition overlooked by all earlier commentators known to me, and by the Westminster Revisers.

Among recent German works, I may mention the re-issue of Meyer's commentary, rewritten by Weiss, also a careful and scholarly work. The editor has the advantage of recent Textual Criticism; but otherwise I prefer the original. A new edition, the fourth edited by Weiss, appeared in 1899. The exposition by Lipsius, in Holzmann's *Handcommentar*, is thoughtful, scholarly, accurate, and lucid. Its compactness leaves little room for statement of the reasons on which the expositor's judgments are based: but they are always worthy of respectful consideration. On the whole, it is one of the very best works on this epistle.

While this edition was in the press, the second volume of *The Expositor's Greek Testament*, containing Dr. Denney's exposition of Romans, appeared. Within limits somewhat too narrow, he has given us a very accurate, attractive, and valuable work. With great pleasure I notice that, whereas for twenty-three years I have stood alone among English commentators in my exposition of Rom. ix. 5, except the note by Dr. Hort, in vol. ii. p. 110 of Westcott and Hort's Greek Testament where he differs from Dr. Westcott, Dr. Denney now stands by my side. But he seems to me in serious error in his note on Rom. viii. 15, where he says, "The aorist refers to the time of

their baptism, when they received the Spirit." The English preterite suggests a definite time in the past, or at least a time definitely removed from the present. And in this sense Dr. Denney interprets here the Greek aorist. But this last "indefinite" tense has no such definite reference. By using it, Paul asserts only that at some time in the past, suddenly or gradually, his readers received the Spirit of adoption. This difference between the Greek and English tenses is recognised by our author under ch. iii. 23 : but it is overlooked under ch. viii. 15 ; and the oversight is serious.

This work of mine was written, and is now republished, in hope that it may help students of the original text to understand and appreciate the great truths which underlie the grammatical forms of the New Testament, and help also that large and increasing number of men and women in every position in life who wish to drink the water of life as it flows from the pen of those commissioned by Christ to announce the salvation which He wrought out for all who believe Him.

Wesleyan College, Richmond,
25th August, 1900.

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INTRODUCTION

SECTION I

OUR STARTING-POINT AND OUR AIM

1. As this work is to some extent argumentative, I shall begin it by stating plainly the assumptions on which the argument rests. I do not wish to take for granted the divine authority or supernatural origin of any part of the Bible. The only admissions I require are matters of fact which no one will deny; especially that a letter exists professing to have been written by the apostle Paul to the Christians at Rome; that it exists in various languages, in millions of printed books bearing all dates from the invention of printing to our own day, and in many hundreds of manuscripts preserved in libraries and monasteries and giving various indications of age; and that it is quoted in many ancient writings of which copies have come down to us.

2. Assuming this, we will inquire whether we have sufficient proof that the epistle was actually written by Paul; and to what extent the letter written by him is correctly represented in our English Revised Version. We will consider certain indications in the epistle as to when, and where, and to whom it was written. We will then study the epistle itself. We will try to understand the meaning of the words used, and to trace the writer's argument. We will carefully observe the facts and doctrines he takes for granted, and the conclusions to which he seeks to bring his readers. As we pass along, we will examine his opinions on several of the matters about which he writes. At the end of our work, we will try to delineate the writer's view of Christ and the Gospel, as that view is reflected on the pages of this epistle.

And, standing by Paul, we will endeavour to see with our own eyes and hear with our own ears the face and the teaching of Jesus.

3. The course of study here begun, I have in other volumes extended to seven other epistles, including all the most important, bearing the name of Paul. By this further study I have endeavoured to gain a still more comprehensive view of the Gospel and of Christ as understood and preached by him. In two other volumes entitled *Through Christ to God* and *The New Life in Christ*, I have attempted to give a connected view of the teaching of the Bible on personal religion: and, in another volume entitled *The Last Things*, I have endeavoured to set forth its teaching about the great events which will close the present order of things, and about the new order which will follow. The whole series is an attempt to gain, as accurately and fully as possible, a knowledge of the eternal realities which in Christ God has revealed to man.

SECTION II

IS THE EPISTLE GENUINE?

1. We now ask, What proof have we that this letter was actually written by the man whose name it bears? To answer this question, we will summon the witnesses at our command.

2. Of these witnesses, the epistle itself is the earliest and most trustworthy. As we study its pages, we are persuaded that the author, whatever his name and position, was a man of great mental power and moral worth. Everything within us bows down

with respect in the presence of one far greater and better than ourselves. The writer claims to be Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ. Apart from the letters attributed to him and the Book of Acts, the name and fame of Paul prove his existence, ability, and influence. This letter, proved by its contents to be a work of a man of worth and power, professes to have been written by Paul, to the Church at Rome, while the author was engaged in active apostolic labour, and before he had been to Rome.

We are driven, by the fact that the epistle exists, to one of three suppositions; either that it was written by someone who deliberately attempted to palm it off as Paul's; or that the beginning and end were added by a deceiver to a document written by an honest man; or that it is a genuine work of Paul. The impression made on us by the moral tone of the epistle makes the first supposition exceedingly difficult. The second is not quite so unlikely. To decide between the second and third, we must call other witnesses.

3. PRINTED BIBLES are found, in various languages, bearing all dates from the present time back to the invention of printing. All contain this epistle, and ascribe it to Paul.

4. Again, in the libraries of Europe are some 500 GREEK MANUSCRIPTS of epistles claiming to be Paul's, of dates varying from the sixteenth to the fourth century. Some are mutilated, some entire; some contain all, some a part of, the epistles attributed in modern Bibles to Paul. Of these MSS., fragmentary though many of them are, a great majority contain this epistle. We find also a still larger number of LATIN MSS. of the same epistles. Some are as old as the sixth century. Most of them have this epistle. Going further from home, we meet in the East with scattered Churches which in the fifth century were broken off from the rest of Christendom. The Nestorians amid the lonely wilds of the Turko-Persian frontier and on the coasts of Southern India, the Jacobites in Egypt and Syria, and the Maronites on the slopes of Lebanon, have lingered to our day, separated from each other and from the rest of the Christian Church. Yet all have ancient MSS. of the Bible in the language of the early Syrian Christians. They all hold as genuine the Epistle to the Romans.

Their long and melancholy isolation proves that, before their secession in the fifth century, the epistle existed, and was received as Paul's. Similar testimony is borne by other ancient Churches in Egypt, Armenia, and Abyssinia.

These MSS. prove that the epistle existed in the fourth century. The number of them proves that it was held in great esteem. This proof is strengthened by the fewness of written copies of other ancient works. Of the Epistle of Clement, the earliest Christian document after the New Testament, until recently only one mutilated copy was known, that contained in the Alexandrian MS. of the Bible: see below, § iii. 4. In A.D. 1875 another Greek MS., dated A.D. 1056, was found at Constantinople. Some months afterwards a Syriac version of the epistle was found. These three MSS. are the only ancient copies, known to us, of this valuable epistle. The immense number of ancient copies of the Epistle to the Romans reveals its importance in the early Church, and thus confirms its genuineness.

5. In order to continue our search into the ages preceding the oldest MSS., we will call another class of witnesses, the EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITERS.

We have a *Church History* from the days of Christ to those of Constantine by EUSEBIUS, bishop of Cæsarea in Palestine. In bks. iii. 28, v. 28, vii. 26 he speaks of events in the reign of Gallienus (A.D. 259—270) as occurring in his own time. His testimony therefore carries us some years beyond the oldest existing MSS. In bk. iii. 3 we read, "The epistles of Paul are fourteen, all well known and beyond doubt. It should not, however, be concealed that some have set aside the Epistle to the Hebrews, saying that it was disputed, as not being Paul's. . . . The same apostle, in the address at the close of the Epistle to the Romans, has among others made mention also of Hermas. . . . Let this suffice for the present, to show what books were disputed, what admitted by all, in the Sacred Scriptures." See also bk. iii. 25. Eusebius admits disputes about the authorship of some of the books of the N.T., but declares that there were none about this.

6. Of an earlier day we have the voluminous writings of ORIGEN, who lived in Egypt and Palestine, A.D. 186—253. He

wrote a commentary on this epistle, as Paul's, of which a Latin translation has come down to us.

7. Several works are extant of TERTULLIAN, who lived, about A.D. 160—240, at Carthage in North Africa. He frequently quotes this epistle as genuine. See especially his work *Against Marcion* bk. v. 13, 14. He says that Marcion rejected parts of the epistle, because they did not suit his teaching; and argues with him from what even he admitted to be genuine. In so doing, he quotes Rom. i. 16, 18; ii. 2, 12, 14, 16, 21, 24, 29; v. 1, 20, 21; vii. 4, 7, 8, 12, 14; viii. 3, 10, 11; x. 2, 3, 4; xi. 33, 34, 35; xii. 9, 12, 16, 17, 18, 19; xiii. 10. Marcion held views utterly opposed to those taught in this epistle; yet he dared not deny its genuineness. Tertullian appeals (*Presc. against Heretics* § 36) to the Churches to which Paul wrote, as the present guardians of his letters. "With whom the authentic letters of the apostles are read, uttering the voice and representing the face of each one. Is Achaia near to thee? Thou hast Corinth. If thou art not far from Macedonia, thou hast Philippi, thou hast Thessalonica. If thou art able to go into Asia, thou hast Ephesus. If thou art near to Italy, thou hast Rome." This appeal reveals the writer's full confidence that these epistles came from the pen of Paul.

8. We go now to Alexandria, where, till about A.D. 220, we find CLEMENT, of whom we possess important works. He and his writings are mentioned in bks. v. 11, vi. 6, 13, 14 of Eusebius' *Church History*. In his *Misc.* bk. i. 1, Clement tells us that he learnt the truth in Greece and Italy from noble men who handed to him the apostles' teaching. Again and again he quotes this epistle as Paul's. As examples I quote *Misc.* bk. iii. 3: "The divine apostle who says, 'O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?'" Also in ch. 4: "The apostle writes in the Epistle to the Romans, 'and not as we are slanderously reported, and as some affirm that we say, Let us do evil that good may come. Whose condemnation is just.'" Again, in ch. 11: "In the same way Paul writes in the Epistle to the Romans, 'We that are dead to sin, how shall we still live therein?' . . . 'since our old man is crucified with Him,

that the body of sin might be destroyed,' to 'neither present your members instruments of unrighteousness to sin.'"

9. Let us now visit Gaul in A.D. 180. We find there IRENÆUS, who has just become bishop of Lyons. His predecessor, Pothinus, has lately been martyred at the age of ninety: Eusebius, *Ch. Hist.* bk. v. 1. Irenæus has been bearer to Rome of a letter from his own Church, of which a fragment has been (see ch. 4) preserved by Eusebius; and in which he is spoken of as a presbyter of the Church. From his pen we have a valuable work *Against Heresies*, which is referred to in ch. 5 of Tertullian's treatise *Against the Valentinians*. In this work, Irenæus says (bk. iii. 3. 4) that in his youth he sat at the feet of Polycarp, a disciple of the apostle John. Since Polycarp was martyred not later than A.D. 166, and Irenæus was bishop in A.D. 180, his birth cannot have been later, and was probably much earlier, than A.D. 150. He constantly quotes this epistle as Paul's. Throughout his writings, there is no trace of doubt about its authorship. The reader may refer to bk. iii. 16. 3: "Paul writing to the Romans, 'Paul an apostle of Jesus Christ, predestined for the Gospel of God, which He promised by His prophets in Holy Scriptures, concerning His Son, who was made of the seed of David according to flesh, who was predestined Son of God in power.' And again, writing to the Romans concerning Israel, he says, 'whose are the fathers, and of whom is Christ according to flesh, who is God over all, blessed for ever.'" Also in § 9: "Paul speaking to the Romans says, 'much more they who obtain the abundance of grace,'" and quotes Rom. v. 17, vi. 3f, v. 6—10, viii. 34, vi. 9, viii. 11. See also chs. 18. 2, 3, 7; 20. 2, 3; 22. 1, 3. He agrees (in ch. 12. 12) with Tertullian that Marcion rejected parts of this epistle, but admitted the remainder as genuine.

The testimony of Irenæus carries us further back even than his own day. With Tertullian and Clement, he appeals to the unanimous teaching handed down from the apostles. In bk. iv. 27. 1, 2, he tells us that one of his teachers quoted this epistle thus, "and therefore Paul said, 'If God spared not the natural branches, etc.';" and says that this teacher had himself listened to the apostles. He speaks (in bk. i. 26. 2) of the Ebionites as

rejecting the writings of Paul on the ground that he was an apostate from the Law. From this we learn that some admitted the genuineness, while they denied the authority, of the letters which bore the name of Paul.

10. We have one more witness of the same date. A torn part of an ancient MS. is preserved in the Ambrosian Library at Milan; which from its discoverer is called the FRAGMENT OF MURATORI. Its date is fixed by a reference to Pius, who is said to have been "very lately" bishop of Rome. From Irenæus (bk. iii. 3. 3, 4) we learn that Pius was bishop in the middle of the second century. The fragment must therefore have been written by a contemporary of Irenæus. It gives a full list of Paul's epistles; and in reference to this epistle says, "He described more fully to the Romans the order of the Scriptures, intimating however that Christ was the chief matter of them."

11. We have no earlier quotations. An important earlier writer is JUSTIN. But he writes for unbelievers; and therefore does not appeal to books which for them had no authority. We find however, in § 23 of his *Dialogue with Trypho*, a passage so similar to this epistle that we cannot but think that Justin had seen it: "For also Abraham himself, being in uncircumcision, because of his faith with which he believed God, was justified and blessed, as the Scripture signifies. And he received circumcision for a sign, but not for righteousness." CLEMENT, who was bishop of Rome at the end of the first century, writes, in ch. 35 of his epistle: "Having cast away from ourselves all unrighteousness and lawlessness, covetousness, debates, malignity and deceit, whisperings and backbitings, hatred of God, pride and boasting, vainglory and want of hospitality. For they who do these things are hateful to God. And not only those who do them, but also they who take pleasure in them."

12. Such are our witnesses. What does their evidence prove? That in the latter half of the second century, in places so far apart as Carthage, Egypt, and Gaul—we may add by sure inference Greece and Rome—no one, friend or foe, doubted that Paul wrote this epistle. We stand by Irenæus in A.D. 180. He is bishop of Lyons. He has been presbyter under Pothinus: and

Pothinus was born in the first century. He gives, in bk. iii. 3. 3, a list of the bishops of Rome from the days of the apostles; and thus reveals his familiarity with the history of that Church. He has himself been a delegate to Rome; and must therefore know the opinion there held about the authorship of this famous epistle. He has learnt the Christian doctrine from the lips of Polycarp and other Christian men. Yet he is utterly unconscious of any difference of opinion on this subject. He says not a word in defence of the genuineness of the epistle: for, where there is no attack, defence is needless. Standing by his side, we catch the words of ancient men on whose lips lingers the echo of an apostle's voice. We hear the din of controversy which arose even in those early days, if not within, at least around, the sacred courts of the Church of Christ. The contention is hushed for a moment, that old and young, friends and foes, may proclaim with one voice that the Epistle to the Romans was written by the apostle Paul.

We now ask, Could this unanimity have been obtained for a writing partly or altogether forged? Suppose a case. The laws of causation have been set aside; and a bramble has produced the fruit of Paradise: a deceiver has written this epistle. Or, a great and good man has written it; and has left his unnamed offspring to the tender mercies of an ungrateful world. The foundling has escaped the notice of everyone else, and come into the hands of a deceiver; and by him has been wrapped up in the garments of Paul, and brought to Rome. When was it brought? Not during the apostle's life. For a unanimous tradition asserts that he died at Rome: and his presence there was a safeguard against such imposture. It must then have been brought after his death. It is shown to the members of the Church. No one has heard of it before. Yet it professes to have been sent to them years ago, when Paul was in active work, and before he came to Rome. They ask at once, Where has the letter been all this time? Why have we not seen it before? The details given in chs. i. and xv. expose the fraud. That this important work is in the form of a letter to a prominent Church, is thus in some sense a voucher for its genuineness,

In short, we have two results for which we seek causes; the existence of the epistle, and its unanimous reception in the second century. In Paul we have an author worthy of the epistle; and in the epistle a work worthy of Paul. If it came from him, its universal reception is accounted for. If it did not, its reception is a fact for which no sufficient cause can be assigned.

13. As yet we have given only a part of the argument. In other volumes I have made out a case as strong as, or stronger than, the above for the genuineness of the Epistles to the Corinthians and the Galatians. And this evidence supports that which I have just adduced for the Epistle to the Romans. For the same spirit breathes in all. And innumerable coincidences, in phrase and thought, of the epistles one compared with the other and of all as compared with the Book of Acts testify strongly to the truth of all. If all are spurious, a stupendous miracle has been wrought for the deception of mankind. If the others are genuine, we have in them another argument for the genuineness of this.

The argument from the intellectual and moral worth of the epistle, from its coincidences with other epistles and with the Book of Acts, and from the oneness of Paul's character as depicted in his writings, can be appreciated only by personal study o the New Testament. I have however sought to answer the question of this section at the beginning rather than at the end of the volume, in order that, in approaching the text of the epistle, we may do so with a reasonable certainty that it came from Paul. The reader will do well to refer to this subject after his study of the text. It is further discussed in my other volumes.

14. The strength of the case I have tried to defend has been universally felt. With exceptions unworthy of mention, this epistle has been received by all, from the Ebionites who detested the author but admitted the authorship to modern rationalists who accept the work as genuine but deny the sacred facts so fully believed by its acknowledged author. Of the latter, a conspicuous example is F. C. Baur, who, while denying the resurrection of Christ, admits (*The Apostle Paul* vol. i. p. 276) that "against these four epistles (see above) not even the slightest suspicion

of spuriousness has ever been raised." That such a writer accepts this epistle as genuine, affords strong presumption that its genuineness cannot be disputed.

Questions of genuineness which have been severely contested are carefully discussed in my volume on the Epistles to the Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians.

15. Let us now review the position gained. What have we proved? Simply that Paul wrote the epistle. By a similar argument we might have proved the authorship of the Dialogues of Plato and of the Koran. The inspiration of the writer and the authority of his writings have not been mentioned. We have however gained much. We began our study in order to come near to Christ, that we might learn what He actually taught. In our search we have found a man who professes to have been commissioned by Him to proclaim His Gospel. We can therefore now listen to an apostle's voice. We stand among the disciples of Paul, and hear what he says about his Master.

We may push the argument one step further. As we listen to Paul, we shall be convinced of his sincerity. His thoughts are too intense to be feigned. The man may be deceived: he is not a deceiver. We shall therefore stand, not merely among the disciples, but within the heart, of Paul. We shall look at Christ as Paul saw Him.

SECTION III

ARE OUR COPIES OF THE EPISTLE CORRECT?

1. We now ask, Is the letter, as Paul wrote it, correctly reproduced in our English Revised Version?

On the title-page of the New Testament (A.V. and R.V.) we read that it was translated out of the Greek. I shall endeavour to show that this epistle was written by Paul in Greek; that, within limits which I shall specify, it is preserved, as he wrote it, in the Greek text underlying the Revised Version; and that the translation is on the whole correct.

2. It might be supposed that a letter to the Roman Church would be written in Latin: but indisputably this was not so. The Latin fathers never claim their own language as the original of any part of the Bible. Augustine complains that, in the early days of the Church, whoever obtained a Greek MS. and knew anything of Greek undertook a translation; and that therefore almost all the Latin copies were different. He adds, "but among the interpretations themselves, let the Italic be preferred before others:" *Christian Doctrine* bk. ii. chs. 11, 15. The best was therefore a translation. Such was the variety of the Latin copies that in A.D. 382 Damasus, bishop of Rome, committed to Jerome the task of revision. Jerome published the Gospels in A.D. 384. In his preface he says to Damasus, "Thou urgest me to make a new work out of an old one, to sit as arbiter on copies of the Scriptures scattered throughout the world; and, because they vary amongst themselves, to determine which are they which agree with the Greek truth." This proves that the Greek copies were the standard with which the Latin were to be compared. Moreover, that the epistle was written not in Latin but in Greek, is put beyond doubt by a comparison of the Greek and Latin copies. In the Latin we constantly find the same thought expressed in different ways: in the Greek, the variations are nearly all such as would naturally arise from the mistakes of a copyist.

The use of the Greek language in this letter was justified by its great prevalence in Rome. This is testified by many writers; and by the MSS. found among the ruins of Herculaneum, which are, I believe, nearly all Greek. Most of the early bishops of Rome bear Greek names.

3. We now ask, To what extent does the Greek text underlying our Revised Version reproduce the epistle as Paul wrote it? To answer this question, we summon again the witnesses who gave

evidence about the genuineness of the epistle. We have the Greek MSS., the ancient versions, and the many quotations from early Christian writers. If these witnesses, so various in origin and form, agree, their agreement is complete proof that they are correct copies of one original. If they differ, we must examine the kind and extent of their difference.

4. The GREEK MSS. are of two kinds; uncials in capital letters, and cursives in running hand. Roughly speaking, the uncials are earlier, and the cursives later, than A.D. 1000.

Eleven uncials of this epistle are known. The most famous are, the Vatican MS. at Rome; the Sinai MS. found by Tischendorf in A.D. 1859 in the monastery at Sinai, and now preserved at St. Petersburg; and the Alexandrian MS. presented in A.D. 1628 by the patriarch of Constantinople to Charles I., and now in the King's Library at the British Museum. This last was written probably in the fifth, and the other two in the fourth, century. They are written on beautiful vellum, and each forms a thick 4to volume some 10 in. to 14 in. square. They have two, three, or four columns on a page. The letters follow each other without any separation into words; and there are very few stops. Corrections by later hands are found in all. Each of them contains a large part of the Old Testament and Apocrypha, all in Greek. The Alex. and Vat. MSS. contain the greater part, and the Sinai MS. the whole, of the New Testament. Not less interesting is the Ephraim MS., in the Imperial Library at Paris. By a strange sacrilege, the writing of the Scriptures was erased to make room for the works of Ephraim, a Syrian father. Fortunately, the erasure was not perfect. And, by the use of chemicals to restore the defaced writing, and by careful examination, the whole has been deciphered. It contains important fragments of the Old and New Testaments, including part of this epistle; and seems to have been written in the fifth century. Also of great interest is the Clermont MS., of the sixth century, with Greek and Latin on opposite pages. The others are of later date.

In addition to these are hundreds of cursives. Collectively they are of interest as reproducing a later text. But they are of little value as aids to reproduce the original.

5. Another test of the correctness of our copies is furnished by the various ancient VERSIONS. The Syriac, Latin, and Coptic are specially important. The former is written in the language called, in the N.T., Hebrew; of which we have specimens in Mt. xxvii. 46, Mk. v. 41, vii. 34, xv. 34, Rom. viii. 15, 1 Cor. xvi. 22. To distinguish it from the tongue of Moses and Isaiah, we now call it Syriac or Aramaic. It was the mother-tongue of Christ and the apostles. Many MSS. preserved by scattered Syrian Churches have been brought to Europe and examined. The Latin copies are very many, and possess interest as being the only form in which the Bible was accessible to the Western Church during the middle ages. Also of great value is the Coptic or Memphitic version from Lower Egypt. Some other versions of less value have also been examined and compared.

6. The very numerous QUOTATIONS from early Christian writers also contribute to answer our question. They have been collected with more or less care. In most cases, their value as witnesses to the original text is not great. For we possess them only in a few late copies into which errors have crept even more than into the best copies of the New Testament. But there are quotations in which the correct reading is by the context made quite certain. And some of these are most valuable. Of all this, my note on Rom. v. 1 supplies instances. Sometimes the writers tell us that the MSS. differed in their day; and not unfrequently they say which reading was then considered the best. Of this, Rom. viii. 11, 1 Cor. xv. 51 are examples. Such references are always valuable.

7. The testimony of the more important of these witnesses has been carefully weighed and recorded. The earliest Greek copies have been reprinted word for word. And of a larger number we have collations, i.e. published lists of their variations from a commonly accepted standard. Of the Alexandrian and Vatican MSS., there have been published photographs of every page, an almost exact reproduction of the original. These enable the student to become familiar with two of the oldest sacred documents extant. We have also Critical Editions of the Greek Testament, giving not only a revised text, but under each verse the variations of the chief manuscripts and versions, and the more important

quotations. Of these, passing over those of an earlier day, I may mention the editions of Lachmann, in A.D. 1842-50, Tischendorf, 8th ed. 1869-72, Tregelles, 1857-70, and of Westcott and Hort in 1881.

8. What then is the testimony of these various witnesses thus carefully interrogated? They reveal, in almost every verse, variations in the ancient copies of the New Testament. But of these a large proportion affect the meaning very slightly or not at all. And very many are proved by the overwhelming weight of contrary testimony to be mere mistakes of copyists. In the edition of Westcott and Hort, vol. i. p. 561, we read: "If comparative trivialities, such as changes of order, the insertion or omission of the article with proper names, and the like, be laid aside, the words in our opinion still subject to doubt can hardly amount to more than a thousandth part of the whole New Testament."

There are, however, important passages in which our earliest copies vary; and some in which they are almost equally divided This proves that into even these earliest copies errors have crept; and makes possible that the reading found in the larger number is not always correct. In Rom. v. 1, some able scholars have ventured to set aside the unanimous verdict of our oldest copies. To detect, amid these variations, the author's own words, is the important and difficult task of the Textual Criticism of the New Testament. The critic endeavours to retrace the steps by which error has crept into the ancient copies, by searching for the reading most likely to have given rise to existing variations. With this aim, various critics have propounded various modes of procedure, arrived at by their comparison of existing documents, principles which I cannot here expound. The results attained are embodied in the Critical Editions of the Greek Testament, mentioned above, and in other works on the same subject. Where the evidence is not decisive, all editors except Tischendorf put the more probable reading in their text and the less probable in the margin. They thus indicate a preference where confident decision is impossible.

9. From the following lists, which contain all the passages in

which the Critical Editors propose or suggest changes of any importance from the text underlying our A.V., the reader may learn how close is the agreement between the results attained in this branch of sacred scholarship, and how narrow is the area still open to doubt.

The following corrections, the Editors propose, without marginal note indicating doubt :—

1. Rom. i. 29 : omit *fornication.*
2. „ „ 31 : „ *implacable*
3. „ iii. 22 : „ *and upon all.*
4. „ iv. 15 : *but where* instead of *for where*
5. „ „ 19 : omit *not.*
6. „ vi. 12 : „ *it in.*
7. „ „ 13 : *as if* instead of *as those that are.*
8. „ vii. 6 : *having died to that* instead of *that being dead.*
9. „ „ 18 : *is not* instead of *I find not.*
10. „ viii. 1 : omit *who walk not after* the *flesh but after* the *Spirit.*
11. „ ix. 31 : omit 2nd *of righteousness.*
12. „ „ 32 : „ *of law.*
13. „ „ 33 : *he that* instead of *whosoever.*
14. „ x. 17 : *Christ* instead of *God.*
15. „ xi. 6 : omit latter half of verse.
16. „ xiii. 9 : „ *thou shalt not bear false witness,*
17. „ xiv. 6 : „ *he that regardeth not, etc.*
18. „ „ 9 : *came to life* instead of *rose and revived.*
19. „ „ 10 : *God* instead of *Christ.*
20. „ „ 15 : *for* „ *but.*
21. „ xv. 24 : omit *I will come to you.*
22. „ „ 29 : „ *of the Gospel.*
23. „ xvi. 24 : omit the verse.

All the above changes are accepted by the English Revisers, and without note except that in Nos. 3 and 23 they tell us, in my view needlessly, that "some ancient authorities add" or "insert" the rejected words. They may all be accepted with complete confidence.

In the following list, the Editors differ, or express doubt in their margin:—

1. Rom. i. 16: insert or omit *first*.
2. „ ii. 2: *but we know* or *for we know*.
3. „ iii. 2: insert or omit *for* before *first*.
4. „ „ 7: *but if* or *for if*.
5. „ „ 28: *we reckon therefore* or *for we reckon*.
6. „ iv. 19: insert or omit *now*.
7. „ v. 1: *let us have* or *we have*.
8. „ „ 2: insert or omit *by faith*.
9. „ vi. 19: „ „ *unto iniquity*.
10. „ vii. 23: *to the law* or *in the law*.
11. „ viii. 2: *made me free* or *made thee free*.
12. „ „ 11: *through His Spirit* or *because of His Spirit*.
13. „ „ 24: slight alterations.
14. „ „ 28: *all things work* or *God works all things*.
15. „ „ 34: insert or omit *from the dead*.
16. „ „ 35: *Christ* or *God*.
17. „ ix. 4: *covenants* or *covenant*.
18. „ „ 28: an unimportant omission.
19. „ x. 5: an unimportant rearrangement.
20. „ „ 9: a slight verbal change.
21. „ xi. 17: *the root of the fatness* or *the root and the fatness*.
22. „ xiv. 5: *one man esteems* or *for one man esteems*.
23. „ „ 12: insert or omit *to God*.
24. „ „ 19: *let us follow* or *we follow*.
25. „ „ 21: insert or omit *or is ensnared or is weak*.
26. „ xv. 19: *Holy Spirit*, *Spirit of God*, or *Spirit*.

Of the above passages, all except ten are noted in the Revisers margin. Of these ten, eight, viz. Nos. 1, 3, 9, 15, 17, 18, 19, 23, are so unimportant or so slightly attested as to be unworthy of mention in a popular version. The other two, No. 11 and still more No. 22, seem to me to deserve mention. The readings overlooked are much better attested than many in the Revisers' margin: and they affect perceptibly the course of thought. No. 7, noted in R.V. margin as read by *some authorities*, has

exceedingly slight documentary evidence; but is rightly placed there because of the great interest attaching to it: see my note. Five other variations, Nos. 8, 13*b*, 14, 16, 20, noted in the margin as read by *some ancient authorities*, are unimportant or slightly attested. Ten other passages, Nos. 2, 4, 5, 6, 10, 12, 13*a*, 21, 24, 25, noted as read by *many ancient authorities*, contain, with Nos. 7, 11, 22, all the variations worthy of serious consideration. On each of these, see my note. The rest of the text underlying the R.V. may be accepted with reasonable confidence as reproducing the actual words of the apostle.

The reading noted by the Revisers in ch. vii. 25 is of no importance. In chs. iii. 22, xii. 11, xiv. 23, xvi. 25—27, they seem to me to have needlessly expressed doubt by putting in their margin very weakly supported readings rejected without note by all Critical Editors.

10. Our question is answered. We have examined witnesses from the solitude of the Egyptian desert and from the monasteries of western Europe, from the coast of Malabar and from the shadow of Sinai. Their testimonies agree. Just as the superscription of Pilate, in different languages, yet with one voice, proclaimed the royalty of Christ, so, in the same three languages, these many witnesses proclaim in one great harmony the one Gospel of Peace.

11. Some may ask, If the differences are so small, is not the Textual Criticism of the New Testament a needless study? If the labour spent had done nothing more than prove that the differences are so small, it would be well repaid. But it has produced other results. The corrections of the text, small as they appear, are important. No. 5 of List I. and Nos. 5 and 6 of List II. make the argument more clear or the words more forceful. No. 19 of List I. detects an unfair argument for the divinity of Christ. In other parts of the New Testament, still more important variations are found. In one case, a question of authorship is affected by the changes we are compelled to adopt. In short, every word of Holy Scripture is more precious than gold; and no labour is lost which removes from it a particle of alloy.

12. One question remains. Do our modern versions fairly

reproduce the text translated? In asking this question, we must remember that every translation is imperfect. It is a lens which absorbs and deflects, while it transmits, the light. This is specially true of languages far removed in time and circumstances. The words do not correspond: phrases correspond still less. Even such common English words as *for* and *but* have no exact equivalents in Greek. In every translation, something is lost in accuracy, clearness, and force. And translations often err, not merely in failing to give the writer's full meaning, but by putting other thoughts in place of his. We ask then, To what extent does our English Revised Version put before us Paul's thoughts?

13. A partial answer to our question may be derived from comparison of the Revised Version with its predecessors, especially with the Roman Catholic Version published at Rheims in A.D. 1582 and the Authorised Version published in A.D. 1611. Here are three translations of very different origin. Yet in the main they agree. We find in all the same epistle, the same arguments, the same teaching. The same spirit breathes in all. It is therefore the spirit not of the translator but of the original writer. Those familiar with Latin or German will do still better by comparing the Vulgate as sanctioned by Popes Sixtus V. and Clement VIII. and Luther's version. The same results will follow. The Trinitarian Bible Society printed a leaflet containing a list of corruptions of the Roman Catholic translations published by the British and Foreign Bible Society. The shortness and unimportance of the list are complete proof that the versions referred to accord substantially with the Protestant versions. And the theological differences of Roman Catholics and Protestants are vouchers for the comparative correctness of that which they agree to accept. I do not say that where these witnesses agree we may rely absolutely upon them; but that they agree in the main, and in the main may be accepted.

14. It is nevertheless true that readers and even writers have not unfrequently fallen into serious errors of doctrine by using only one version of the Bible, e.g. the English Authorised Version A dangerous mistranslation, only in part corrected in the R.V., is found in A.V. of Heb. vi. 4—6. A good safeguard against such

error is the use of various translations. As a second and better translation to put beside the familiar Authorised Version, the Revised Version is of immense value. Another safeguard is the constant comparison of Scripture with Scripture. Hold with great caution any doctrine not frequently taught in the Bible. The Spirit of Inspiration has made provision for defects of translation by giving us the vital truths in many and various forms. A third safeguard is found in the argumentative form of much of the New Testament. The meaning of one statement is often determined by another given in proof. By tracing the line of thought, we shall for the most part be saved from serious error and guided aright. Moreover, all careful study will make us more familiar with the sacred writer's modes of thought and style of writing. There is no limit to the extent to which a student of the English Bible may lessen the disadvantage of using a translation. This is especially true of those who, desiring to know His will, seek in their study of the Bible the guidance of the Spirit of God. In approaching the Book, they approach God; and through the written word God speaks to them. They recognise each deeper insight into its meaning as a revelation from Him who unveils to the humblest who sit at His feet much which lies concealed from others more educated. In many cases, even the difficulties of the Bible will be an occasion of gratitude to Him who makes the darkness to be light about us.

15. The translation here given is no rival to the Revised Version. Indeed, I have not been careful to give always good idiomatic English. I have sought merely to reproduce in modern English, at any cost of elegance or good grammar, as accurately and as fully as possible the sense of the Greek words used by Paul. Moreover, a translation was needful in order to convey to the reader, especially to those familiar with the original, my interpretation of the grammatical forms there used. It would have been useless to reprint or revise another version. Yet, without a continuous text of the epistle, the volume would have been incomplete. The use of various translations is helpful by teaching us to lean not on the outward form of the Bible but on its inner sense.

SECTION IV

WHEN, WHERE, TO WHOM, AND WITH WHAT PURPOSE, WAS THE EPISTLE WRITTEN?

1. Of these questions, the first three are less important than those discussed in the foregoing sections. To answer them is no essential part of my argument. Our proof that this epistle expresses the mind of Paul would remain even if we knew not when and where and to whom it was written. At the same time we shall find information on these topics which we cannot afford to neglect. Moreover, to sift details, gives us closer contact with the men and facts of the Bible and a firmer conviction of their reality. It will be so in this case.

2. We may fix the date of a book in reference either to some common era such as the year of our Lord or to other events in the life of the writer. The former method tells us what was taking place in the world at the same time; the latter will connect this letter with whatever else we know of Paul. This latter method we now adopt. The place of the epistle in the Christian era is carefully discussed in Diss. iii. of my volume on *Corinthians*.

3. Paul tells us, in chs. i. 8—15, xv. 23—33, that he has not yet been at Rome, that he is free, on his way to Jerusalem with money collected for the Christians there by those in Macedonia and Achaia. He looks forward to Jerusalem with fear; but hopes to be saved from the Jews and then to go through Rome to Spain. Let us compare this with what he says elsewhere about himself. In 1 Cor. xvi. 1ff (written apparently from Ephesus: see *v.* 8) Paul speaks of the collection as not yet made at Corinth, but hopes to find it ready when he arrives there: he expects to spend some time at Corinth, and then to either take or send the money to Jerusalem. In 2 Cor. ii. 12f, we find that Paul has left Ephesus and come through Troas to Macedonia. The Macedonian collection is

made; that of Achaia, of which province Corinth was the capital, is not yet made: chs. viii. 1—4, ix. 1—6. And Paul is on his way to Corinth: chs. ix. 4, xii. 20, xiii. 1. Thus, although this epistle does not mention those to Corinth, nor the converse, the three epistles are bound together by a matter common to all. The letter to Rome is evidently later than those to Corinth; but was written while Paul was engaged in the same business.

4. We turn now to the Book of Acts, written probably by a companion of Paul: see Diss. ii. of my *Corinthians*. It makes no mention of these epistles, nor directly of the collection; and may therefore be looked upon as an independent witness. We will compare the account it gives with the facts already gathered from Paul's letters. The proposed visit to Jerusalem cannot be later than that recorded in Acts xxi. 15, which was followed by his arrest. Let us trace his previous course. In ch. xix. 21, xx. 1, we find him at Ephesus, intending to go through Macedonia and Achaia to Jerusalem, and then to Rome. He goes through Macedonia to Greece, which formed the Roman province of Achaia. After spending three months there, he goes through Macedonia and Miletus to Jerusalem, a circuitous route occasioned by a plot of the Jews. He has been warned of danger at Jerusalem: ch. xx. 23. In ch. xxiv. 17, he tells Felix that he came to Jerusalem bringing alms for his nation. Here we have the details gathered from the epistles. We therefore infer that the Epistle to the Romans was written during the journey narrated in Acts xx.

Since, as we learn from Rom. xv. 26, the collection was already made, Paul must have arrived in Achaia. And it is much more likely that this letter, which bears marks of deliberation, was written during Paul's three months' sojourn there than on his journey from Greece to Jerusalem. Now Corinth was the capital of Achaia; the letters to Corinth say that Paul was going there; and communication with Rome was more easy from Corinth than from any other point in Paul's course. We therefore infer that the epistle was written from Corinth. And this is confirmed by the mention in ch. xvi. 1 of Cenchreæ, the port of Corinth.

From Acts xx. 6 we learn that Paul sailed from Philippi shortly

after Easter on his way from Corinth to Jerusalem. He must therefore have been at Corinth during the winter. Rom. xv. 25 implies that the letter was written almost at the close of his sojourn there. From all this we infer as probable that the Epistle to the Romans was written from Corinth, in the early part of the year in which Paul was arrested at Jerusalem. In Diss. iii. of my *Corinthians*, I have adduced reasons for believing that the year referred to was A.D. 59, and clear proof that the letter was written early in the reign of Nero.

Notice also that, of the men with Paul when writing, (see Rom. xvi. 21,) Timothy and Sosipater (or Sopater) are mentioned in Acts xx. 4 as his companions on his journey towards Jerusalem. Gaius, his host, (see Rom. xvi. 23,) was perhaps the man mentioned in 1 Cor. i. 14 as belonging to the Church at Corinth. The same name is found in Acts xx. 4. But the frequency of the name leaves us uncertain whether it refers to the same man.

5. If the above inferences be correct, this epistle stands in close relation to 1 and 2 Corinthians. That this is actually so, I have proved at some length in Diss. i. of my *Corinthians*.

A study of these details greatly confirms the genuineness of all three epistles. The coïncidences prove that we have here real persons; and that the collection of money and the journey were actually made. All possibility of fraud is taken away by the incidental nature of the references.

6. About the Christians at Rome, to whom the epistle was written, our earliest information is derived from the letter itself. And it is very scanty. The number of persons greeted in ch. xvi., probably a small part of the whole, suggests a community of some size. The appeal in ch. ii. 17 implies a Jewish element; but the general tone of the letter, e.g. chs. i. 6, 13, xi. 13, suggests a majority of Gentiles. The Church was famous everywhere: ch. i. 8. But this is partly accounted for by the fact that from every place there was a road to Rome. Some of the members had been long in the faith: ch. xvi. 7. There are no traces of error among the people. Had there been serious error, it would, from the conspicuous position of the Church, have been known to Paul, and probably referred to in

the epistle. The letter suggests a Church of some years' standing, of stability and importance. This is confirmed by the Roman historian Tacitus, who tells us (*Annals* bk. xv. 44) that six years later "an immense multitude" were convicted in Rome of being Christians, and put to death.

7. The origin of the Church at Rome is unknown. During the ministry of Christ, many thousands of Jews lived there. So Josephus, *Antiquities* bk. xvii. 11. 1: "The number of the ambassadors sent by the authority of the nation was fifty, to which they joined eight thousand Jews that were at Rome already." Similarly Philo, *On the Virtues of Ambassadors* § 23: "The great division of Rome which is on the other side of the Tiber, which was occupied and inhabited by the Jews. And they were mostly Roman citizens, having been emancipated: for, having been brought as captives into Italy, they were emancipated by those who had bought them for slaves. . . . They were in the habit of contributing sacred sums of money from their firstfruits, and sending them to Jerusalem by the hands of those who were to conduct the sacrifices." They also made proselytes. So Josephus, *Antiquities* bk. xviii. 3. 5: "Fulvia, a woman of great dignity, and one who had embraced the Jewish religion."

In Acts ii. 10, we find Roman Jews and proselytes at a feast at Jerusalem. It must have been so during our Lord's lifetime. These pilgrims would probably hear His preaching: and in this way the good seed may have been early carried to Rome. The close connection of the metropolis with other parts of the empire would bring Romans, both Jews and Gentiles, into contact with the Gospel. Of this, the case of Cornelius is an example. Some converted in other places would probably sojourn or settle at Rome. So probably Aquila, one of the Jews banished from Rome by Claudius. For, when Paul first met him, he is spoken of only as "a Jew:" Acts xviii. 2. In Rom. xvi. 3, 4 we find him again in Rome, holding Christian meetings in his house. Of all places, it was most likely that in Rome the Gospel would take root even without apostolic help. And this is the simplest explanation of the origin of the Church there.

Irenæus (bk. iii. 3. 2) speaks of "the Church founded and

constituted at Rome by the two most glorious apostles Peter and Paul." But this epistle is complete proof that the Christian community at Rome was not founded by Paul: and this disproof weakens greatly the above statement as proof that it was founded by Peter. All that we can infer is that these apostles laboured at Rome, and thus contributed to the establishment of the Church. The argument, from the silence of the epistle about him, that Peter had not been at Rome when Paul wrote is weakened by the absence in 1 Peter, written to Churches founded by Paul, of any mention of him.

8. We notice that in this epistle Paul lays aside the tone of authority with which he had recently addressed the Churches in Corinth and Galatia, founded by himself. His maxim not to build on another's foundation (ch. xv. 20) seems to have kept him from Rome. He could not go there until he went on his way to countries beyond. This is however no proof that the Church there was founded by another apostle. Other men, apostles, elders, or private Christians, had preached there; and had thus laid a foundation. Paul preferred to preach where Christ was not yet known.

9. We cannot detect in this epistle, as we can in those to the Corinthians and Galatians, any definite occasion prompting its composition. It does not seem to have been written to correct any special error, or to give information on any special subject. But we can easily understand the writer's purpose. For years he has watched with interest the Roman Church. He sees its importance in relation to the Western world. Many friends at Rome increase this interest. At length he has a prospect of visiting them, but only for a short time. A deaconess of a neighbouring Church is going to Rome. And Paul takes the opportunity of sending a letter which will be an outline, and an authoritative standard, of his teaching, and thus a forerunner of himself. Consequently, this is, of all his letters, the most general and complete. It is the Gospel according to Paul.

The exact aim must be gathered from the epistle itself. An outline is given in the table of contents at the beginning of this volume. Paul's purpose, as I understand it, is, To assert, and

logically develop, as an organic whole, the good news of salvation announced by Christ, especially in view of the distinction of Jew and Gentile; to show that this good news is in harmony with God's declarations and conduct as recorded in the Old Testament; and to apply it to matters of secular and of church life.

SECTION V

SUGGESTIONS FOR BIBLE STUDY

A few suggestions for method of study may be helpful to the young student.

1. First determine the text of the epistle, i.e. the words actually written by Paul. For the Greek text, note the different readings of the Critical Editions, both where one differs from another and where an editor records his doubt by putting an alternative reading in the margin. This may be easily done by using the editions of Scrivener or Gebhardt or the Stutgard edition. The student of the English Bible may do the same by carefully observing the marginal notes of the Revised Version, especially those marked "Many ancient authorities read." In § 3, I have given lists of all various readings worthy of consideration.

2. The next step should be to read consecutively and carefully the whole epistle, noting specially its various turning-points. These last are indicated by a manifestly new topic, by a change of tone, and sometimes by the entrance of a new word or by a new grammatical construction. They admit of many gradations of importance, noting primary, secondary, or subordinate divisions

of the epistle. For example, in ch. i. 8 Paul passes from a Christian greeting in the third person to matters between himself and his readers in the first person singular and the second person plural. In *v.* 16, he passes on from these to the great matter of the epistle, viz. the Gospel of salvation for every believer. In *v.* 18, he turns suddenly from the Gospel to God's anger against sin which made it needful; and in ch. iii. 21 returns to a fuller exposition of the Gospel. These two transitions mark off chs. i. 18—iii. 20 as an integral part of the epistle. Within this last, we note minor transitions, e.g. in ch. ii. 1 from men who worship idols, spoken of in the third person plural, to a man who though equally guilty hopes to escape punishment, whom Paul accosts in the second person singular. At *v.* 12 the word *law* introduces a new thought, as does *circumcision* in *v.* 25. In ch. iii. 1, and again in *v.* 9, a new subordinate topic is introduced by a sudden question.

For an intelligent view of the epistle as a whole, and of each part in its relation to the whole, this analysis of it into primary and subordinate divisions is of utmost importance. An aid to it will be found in the table of contents at the beginning of this volume. The student will notice the beginning and the end, and the main body, of the epistle. In this last, I have marked five *divisions*. Their titles form a rudimentary outline of it. The titles of the subordinate *sections* form a longer outline of the whole epistle.

3. After this preliminary survey, the student will concentrate his attention on one section. In so doing, the meaning of its *words* claims first attention. These are the very alphabet of exposition and of theology. Only by learning the sense in which the sacred writers use their own words, can we follow their thoughts. The meaning of the Greek words must be learnt from their use by earlier Greek writers, still more from their use in the Septuagint version of the Old Testament, in which we find Hebrew thought clothed in Greek forms, and lastly from their use in the New Testament. For all this, a good concordance, English or Greek, is indispensable. A careful comparison of the use of words in the Revised Version of the Old and New Testaments with the

help of a concordance will give a wonderfully accurate knowledge of the meaning of Bible words.

The meaning of the words of this epistle has received special attention in this volume. The results are embodied in special notes scattered through my exposition.

After the words, the phrases need careful study. Indeed the teaching of the whole epistle is coloured by the meaning of a phrase used in chs. i. 17, iii. 21, 22, x. 3.

Our next work is to trace the apostle's line of thought. For this difficult task we shall need every resource at our disposal, the meaning of the words, inflections, phrases, and a grammatical and logical analysis of sentences. His arguments deserve special study. We must carefully note and distinguish the facts and principles taken for granted, and the inferences drawn from them. From these last we must endeavour to reproduce Paul's conception of the Gospel and of Christ: and this conception thus reproduced will shed light upon the various parts of the epistle.

4. At the close of this work, in Diss. i., I sum up the results of our study and endeavour to estimate the practical worth of the conception of the Gospel embodied in this epistle. We shall find that the facts and doctrines here assumed are assumed also, in other forms, by the other writers of the New Testament; that the facts assumed will bear the most searching tests of historical criticism; and that the doctrines may be traced by reliable documentary evidence to the lips of Christ. Thus will our study contribute to the exposition and the proof of the Gospel.

A careful study of the words and arguments of this epistle will enrich greatly the student's own spiritual life. And this spiritual enrichment will shed important light on the meaning of the apostle's words. For it will enable us to see the matters about which he writes from his own point of view. Access to the inmost sanctuary of Holy Scripture is granted only to those who come to worship.

EXPOSITION

SECTION I

PAUL GREETS THE ROMAN CHRISTIANS

CH. I. 1—7

Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, a called apostle, set apart for the *Gospel of God,* [2] *which He promised before through His prophets in Holy Scriptures* [3] *concerning His Son, who was born from David's seed according to flesh,* [4] *who was marked out* as *Son of God in power according to spirit,* a spirit *of holiness, by resurrection of* the *dead, Jesus Christ our Lord,* [5] *through whom we received grace and apostleship, for obedience of* (or *to*) *faith in all the nations, on behalf of His name;* [6] *among whom are ye also, called ones of Jesus Christ;* [7] *to all the beloved ones of God that are at Rome, called saints; grace to you and peace, from God our Father and* the *Lord Jesus Christ.*

1. Writing as a stranger to the Christians at Rome, Paul begins by telling them his name, his position in the Church, the work for which he was placed in that position, and how this work brings him into contact with them. **Paul**: in Latin, *Paulus*, as in Acts xiii. 7: well known as the name of an illustrious Roman family. **Servant**: see under ch. vi. 16: one who acts habitually at the bidding of another. *Servant* **of Jesus Christ**: Paul's first description of himself. The same title is given in ch. vi. 22 to all Christians. In the O.T., the term "servant of Jehovah" sometimes (e.g. Josh. i. 1, 2, 7, 13, 15) denotes men who received direct commands from God, and who therefore in a special sense did His bidding. *Jesus:* name given to our Lord at birth as a man among men: see Mt. i. 21. *Christ:* a Greek word equivalent to *Messiah* in Hebrew (cp. Jno. i. 41, iv. 25) and denoting *anointed*. Cp. Acts iv. 26, 27 with Ps. ii. 2. In 2 Sam. ii. 14, 16, Saul is

called "Jehovah's Messiah," and in the LXX. "the Lord's Christ." The priest is called in Lev. iv. 5 *Messiah* or *Christ*. In Dan. ix. 25 the word is expressly applied to the coming Deliverer and King. So Bk. of Enoch, ch. xlviii. 10. In this sense the word became common among the Jews. They used it constantly for the expected Saviour, in reference to the kingdom of which He was the designated Heir: see Jno. iv. 25. The name *Jesus* speaks of a known man who lived at Nazareth and was crucified at Jerusalem. To add to this the name *Christ*, was to declare that He is the hoped-for Deliverer and future King. By calling himself *a servant of Jesus Christ*, Paul acknowledges that Jesus is Messiah and pays Him honour by calling Him Master. These words also suggest the kind of work Paul has to do, viz. to aid in setting up His kingdom. And they express his thoughts as he takes up his pen to write this letter: he writes, not to please himself, but as a servant doing his master's work. They thus give him a claim upon his readers' attention. A man who knocks at our door and calls himself a servant of some great one implies that he has come on his master's business, and claims an attention to be measured by the importance, not of himself, but of his master.

A called apostle: one who by a divine call was made an apostle. It asserts Paul's position among the servants of Christ. *Apostle*: an English form of a Greek word denoting one *sent* on some special business. "Missionary," derived from the Latin, has almost the same meaning. So Jno. xiii. 16: "nor an apostle greater than he that sent him." It is translated *messenger* in 2 Cor. viii. 23, Phil. ii. 25. Same word in 1 Kgs. xiv. 6, LXX. Alex. MS. It was given by Christ (Lk. vi. 13) to the first rank of His ministers, because (Jno. xx. 21) they were personally *sent* by Him on a great mission: cp. 1 Cor. xii. 28, Eph. iv. 11. By describing himself as an apostle, Paul claims this first rank. He was *called* to it by Christ as described in Acts xxvi. 16—18: "to whom I now *send* thee." See also 1 Cor. ix. 1, Gal. i. 1.

Set apart for the **Gospel of God**: the work for which Paul was called to be an apostle. *Set apart* or *marked off*: a line drawn round him separating him from others: cognate to *marked off* in *v.* 4. *Gospel*: the Greek word is cognate to "evangelist" and "evangelize," and denotes *good news*, bringer of good news, etc. It is applied to personal matters in 2 Sam. xviii. 19, 20, 27, LXX.; Lk. i. 19, ii. 10, 1 Th. iii. 6. Cp. Isa. lii. 7 with Rom. x. 15. The Gospel is *good news* from *God*. *For* this *good news*, i.e. to

proclaim it, Paul was *set apart*. He had nothing else to do. Even when working as a tentmaker, he did so in order thus the more effectually to preach the Gospel: 1 Cor. ix. 12. In the purpose of God, Paul was set apart (Gal. i. 15, 16) before his birth: he received the actual call on the road to Damascus. In Acts xiii. 2 he was further set apart to take the Gospel to foreign countries. [The all-important preposition εἰς, which I have rendered *for*, (in A.V. and R.V. *unto*,) denotes primarily motion towards the inside of something, then tendency intentional or involuntary, and very frequently definite mental direction or purpose. It may be studied in *vv.* 5, 11, 16, 24, 27, iii. 26, iv. 20, v. 8, 12, 18, vi. 3, 4, vii. 10, viii. 7, 28, ix. 22, 23, xv. 24—26, xvi. 6. In ch. ii. 4, it must be rendered *towards*. It denotes always direction, either of actual movement, or tendency, or thought and purpose.]

2. Further information about the Gospel for which Paul was set apart. **Which he promised before**: God foretold through the prophets not only good things to come but the announcement of the good things, i.e. that salvation would be preceded by glad tidings of salvation. See Isa. xl. 1—10, lii. 7—10; Rom. x. 15. In one sense, God proclaimed beforehand (Gal. iii. 8) the good news to Abraham; but only as something far off and indistinct. To him and to the prophets it was only a promise of good things in a far future. **Prophets**: men *through* whom God spoke to their fellow-men: see note under 1 Cor. xiv. 40: cp. Heb. i. 1. The words following prove that *the prophets* referred to were those whose *writings* have come down to us. **Scriptures**: *writings* of any kind. **Holy**: that which stands in special relation to God: see note below. The phrase *Holy Scriptures* separates these writings from all others, and classes them with the holy objects of the Old Covenant, e.g. the sabbath, temple, sacrifices, and priesthood, as belonging in a special sense to God. See Diss. iii. The promise of good news passed **through** the prophets' lips: it abides and speaks **in** the sacred writings.

This verse claims attention for the Gospel. That for which the way was prepared during centuries, and to proclaim the advent of which men like Isaiah and Jeremiah were sent, must indeed be great. To many of Paul's readers, the prophets were almost superhuman. And to them the Old Testament was separated from all other books as holy, i.e. as belonging specially to God. This holy book and these prophets of God declared that in days to come good news from God would be announced. (In ch. x.

Paul will prove that his Gospel corresponds with what they foretold.) Therefore by his readers' reverence for the book and the men he claims their attention. Again, by appealing to the prophets and the Scriptures, Paul pays honour to the Old Covenant. That the ancient prophets and books foretold the Gospel, increases our respect for them as well as for it. Paul thus guards against the error both of those who deny the abiding authority of the Old Testament and of those who claim as final the revelation therein recorded. We shall find that it was because these thoughts lay near the apostle's heart that they came to his pen at the first mention of the Gospel. For coincidences, see Acts xiii. 32, xxvi. 6; iii. 18, x. 43.

3, 4. The great subject-matter of the Gospel, still further claiming our reverent attention. Just as the title "Jesus Christ" set forth our Lord as a man among men and as the hope and future king of Israel, so the title **His Son** declares His relation to God. That Paul uses this term to denote one definite person, and expects his readers to know to whom he refers, implies that Christ is the Son of God in a sense which marks Him out from all others, i.e. that He stands in a relation to God shared by no one else. This unique relation finds fuller expression in ch. viii. 3, 32.

Who was born: literally *came into being*, either absolutely as men do at birth, or *came into* a new mode of *being* as when men become what they were not before. It neither implies, nor excludes, previous existence. That Paul refers to Christ's birth (cp. Gal. iv. 4) through which He entered (Jno. i. 14) a mode of being derived **from David's seed,** we infer from these last words. He sprang by birth from the descendants of David: Jno. vii. 42, 2 Tim. ii. 8. *Seed:* common in the Bible (Jno. viii. 33, etc.) to denote offspring in whom a family lives on to other generations. Paul takes for granted, as needing no proof, that Christ sprang *from David.* As we read them, the genealogies in Mt. i. and Lk. iii. are no complete proof of this: for they give only the descent of Joseph. But in this matter Paul is himself a reliable authority. The genealogy of Christ was important to the Jews of Paul's day; and was doubtless (Heb. vii. 14) sufficiently evident. To us it is of less importance: and evidence which to us would be superfluous is not given. Christ's descent from David gave Him a claim upon the Jews as a descendant of their ancient kings; and as a scion of the stock to which the future royalty was promised: Jer. xxiii. 5, Ps. cxxxii. 11.

Flesh: the material of our bodies which we have in common

with other men, and, in a different form, with all that breathes. See note under ch. viii. 11. **According to** *flesh;* limits the foregoing assertion to the outer, lower, visible, and material side of the nature of Christ, i.e. to the constitution of His body, which indisputably came forth *from David's seed.* And this bodily descent is sufficient to justify these words, here and in ch. ix. 3, 5, without supposing that Paul thought also of the derivation of His human soul from human ancestors. That the human soul of Jesus was in some measure thus derived, this suggested limitation does not deny. For, to limit an assertion is not to limit the extent of that which is asserted, but limits only the sense which the writer intends his words to convey. In this case, that all living flesh is animated by a corresponding invisible principle, makes it easy to extend to this invisible principle some things said about its visible frame. But the agency of the Holy Spirit (Lk. i. 35) in the birth of Christ forbids us to infer that His human spirit stood in the same relation to human ancestry as do our spirits. This mysterious subject however was probably far from Paul's thought. It was sufficient for his purpose to say that, touching His material side, He *was born from David's seed:* for this made Him David's heir.

4. Notice the stately parallel, and the greater length and fulness of the second clause, corresponding with the greater dignity there set forth. Beside that which his Master *became*, Paul now sets something which He **was marked out** to be, viz. **Son of God.** Literally, a *boundary line was drawn* between Him and others: so Num. xxxiv. 6, Josh. xiii. 27, LXX. And, whereas the mode of being entered at birth was derived *from David's seed*, this visible boundary was derived **from** His **resurrection.** Since the distinction thus marked was derived, not from something peculiar to that one event, but from its abstract significance as an uprising of one who had been dead, the event is called generically a *resurrection of dead ones.* On earth, as we shall see in Diss. i. 7, Christ claimed to be, in a sense raising Him infinitely above all others, the Son of God. From His empty grave went forth proof that this claim was just. This proof is therefore a line drawn around Jesus on the page of human history and in human thought.

The words **in power** do not supplement the title *Son of God.* For the contrast in *v.* 3 does not suggest weakness. But the word *marked-out* needs further explanation. The resurrection of Christ was a conspicuous manifestation of divine *power.* And *in* this manifested *power* lay the proof of the justice of Christ's

claim to be *Son of God*. From His empty grave went forth, amid an outshining of divine power, a line which marks the infinite exaltation of Jesus above men and angels. See 2 Cor. xiii. 4, Phil. iii. 10, Eph. i. 19f, Mt. xxii. 29, Acts iii. 12, iv. 7.

According to flesh, i.e. in reference to the constitution of His body, our Lord was born from David's seed: but **according to spirit**, i.e. in reference to the inner, invisible, higher, immaterial, and animating side of His nature, He *was marked out* as *Son of God*. Paul now thinks no longer of the lips and hands derived from David's seed, but of the unseen living principle which moved those hands, spoke through those lips, and smiled through that human face. By His resurrection, in reference to this unseen principle within, He was marked out as standing in a relation to God infinitely higher than that of even the noblest of His creatures.

In the human form born at Bethlehem, there dwelt, as the divine source of the human activity of Christ, the spirit of the eternal Son of God. But there dwelt also (see my *Through Christ to God* lect. xxxi.), closely associated with His human body, a created human soul, i.e. an animal life capable of hunger and thirst and bodily pain; and a human spirit permeated by, and reproducing the moral character of, the divine personality of the eternal Son. Each of these, as being invisible and immaterial, is spirit and not flesh. But the very close association of the soul with the body, its appetites corresponding, in all animals, with the nature of the body, suggests that this lower human soul of Jesus was in some measure derived from David's seed. On the other hand, the sinlessness of the human spirit of Jesus, and the agency of the Holy Spirit at His birth, mark off His relationship to the race through one parent as quite different from our relation through two parents. Apparently, just as at first God breathed into an erect human form a rational spirit, thus creating a race holding a relation to God not shared by animals around, so at the incarnation, by the agency of the personal and eternal Breath of God, He breathed into human nature a higher life, thus placing humanity in a new and more glorious relation to Himself. But of these distinctions Paul probably does not here think. He thinks only of two contrasted elements in Christ. The power manifested in His resurrection proved that through Jewish lips (and, as we infer, through the mediation of a human spirit and soul) had spoken the Eternal Son of God.

Spirit of holiness: a spirit characterised by unreserved

devotion to God: see note under *v.* 7. Such was, by its very nature, the spirit which animated the body born at Bethlehem. When we look at Christ's body, we find Him like ourselves, and we call Him David's Son: but when we consider the spirit which moved those lips and hands and feet, which breathed in that human breast, turning always and essentially to God, we declare Him to be Son of God.

With singular unanimity the early commentators, (Origen is indefinite and confounds the divine nature of Christ with the Holy Spirit, and so is Augustine,) Chrysostom and Theodoret in the East, followed by Photius (*Question* 283), Œcumenius, and Theophylact, with the very early anonymous writer quoted as Ambrosiaster probably in the West, understand by *spirit of holiness* the Holy Spirit. With them agree some moderns. The exposition given above, I have not found in any early writer. So general a consensus demands respectful attention, but not implicit obedience. For the following reason, with Meyer, Sanday, and other moderns, I am unable to accept it.

Of the Holy Spirit, there is no hint in the whole chapter. To make such reference clear, the usual title would have been needful. By not using this title, Paul suggests that he does not refer here to the personal Spirit of God. No other reason for the phrase *spirit of holiness* instead of *Holy Spirit*, can I conceive. Moreover, if Paul refers to the Holy Spirit, he leaves quite indefinite His relation to the risen Saviour. This would be the more remarkable because nowhere else does he speak plainly of the Holy Spirit (cp. Mt. xii. 28, Lk. iv. 14) as a directive principle of the life of Christ. It is very unlikely that Paul would give a mere hint, in needlessly ambiguous language, of teaching which neither the context nor his own teaching elsewhere explains.

It cannot be objected that *Spirit* is the name, not of the Second, but of the Third, Person of the Trinity. For, although this term specially designates this last, as being present to our thought chiefly as the animating divine principle of the Christian life, yet it is not confined to Him. The entire nature of God is spirit; as is that in us which is nearest to God. Moreover, the term is used here to designate, not expressly the divine nature of Christ, but simply the higher element of His nature. That in Him this higher nature is divine, we learn elsewhere.

The order of *vv.* 3, 4 is the order of Christ's historical manifestation. He first showed Himself to men as David's Son: and then by resurrection was proved to be the Son of God.

Jesus Christ our Lord: the Son in His relation to us. He is Jesus of Nazareth, the hope of Israel, our Lord. *Lord:* one who has control over men and things. So Mt. xxi. 40, "lord of the vineyard;" ch. xii. 8, "Lord of the Sabbath." It is correlative with "servant," as in Rom. xiv. 4, Mt. xxiv. 45, 50, xxv. 18—26; and is the title most frequently used to set forth Christ's relation to us, as in 1 Cor. viii. 6, xii. 3, Eph. iv. 5. For its use in the O.T., see under ch. ix. 29. *Our:* probably without definite limitation. Of all Christians, Christ is Lord.

5. Christ's relation to Paul and to his readers. **Through**: διά with genitive: a most important N.T. word. It denotes the means, whether it be an unconscious instrument or an intelligent agent, through which an effect is brought about, the channel through which purpose passes into actuality; whether or not the agent be also the first cause. It denotes regularly Christ's relation to the universe and to the work of salvation: so *v.* 8, iii. 24, v. 1, 2, 10, 11, 17, 19, 21, 1 Cor. viii. 6, Jno. i. 3, 10, 17. The plural **we** does not refer to others who joined Paul in this letter, as in 1 and 2 Thessalonians, nor can it include the readers. For the phrase **in all the nations**, added to give Paul's reason for writing to men at Rome, calls our attention away from the other apostles. It refers probably to Paul only. Such use of the plural in formal documents is common in all languages and ages. It was perhaps suggested by remembrance that others besides Paul had received this apostleship, and a still larger number the favour of God. **Grace**: that quality which calls forth *favour* or approbation in a beholder. Such objects are graceful. Since the favour called forth depends upon the character and abides in the heart of the beholder, we have the phrase "to find grace in one's sight;" as in Lk. i. 30, Acts vii. 46. Since this favour springs from generosity, we read of "grace given" and "received:" Rom. xii. 3, 6, xv. 15, 2 Cor. vi. 1, and this verse. Favour prompts us to do good to its object; and this good done, arising simply from good-will, stands in contrast to obligation, as in Rom. iv. 4. When we were in sin, God looked upon us. Repulsive as we were, in His sight we found favour. For he saw in us His own image, so sadly marred: and the sight called forth in the breast of God that which prompted Him to save us. The grace of God is His love seeking out its object and contemplating it with a purpose of blessing. *Through* the great Person just described, Paul and others became objects of the *favour* of God. Not that Christ moved God to look on us

with favour, but that the birth and death of Christ are the channel through which God's favour reached us. For Christ is Himself a gift of the "grace of God:" Heb. ii. 9. See Rom. iii. 24—26, viii. 32. **Apostleship**: Christ was the divine agent *through whom* God made Paul an *apostle*. Just as Elisha, a prophet sent from God and speaking with God's authority, was appointed to his work by Elijah at God's bidding, so Paul was appointed by the voice of Christ at the Father's bidding. He was "an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the command of God:" 1 Tim. i. 1. See Gal. i. 1. First *favour*, then *apostleship:* for God's favour is the source of all other blessings: 1 Cor. xv. 10, Eph. iii. 8. **For obedience of faith**: same words in Rom. xvi. 26: purpose for which Paul was made an apostle, viz. that men may obey faith: cp. 2 Cor. x. 5, "for the obedience of Christ." We obey faith by believing. Faith is itself submission to God. To make this prominent, Paul writes, not "for faith" as in *v.* 17, but *for obedience of faith.* Cp. Acts vi. 7, "obeyed the faith;" also Rom. x. 3, 16, ii. 8. **In all the nations**: sphere in which God sent Paul to evoke obedience to faith. *Nations*, or *Gentiles:* cp. ch. xv. 10 with Dt. xxxii. 43; ch. xv. 11 with Ps. cxvii. 1; and ch. xv. 9 with Ps. xviii. 49. The Jews looked upon themselves as separate from all others, and therefore needed a word to mark the separation. They noticed that they were one; and called themselves a people, the people of God. The rest of mankind consisted of various nations, all strangers to Israel. Hence the contrast in Acts xxvi. 17, 23. They therefore used the plural form *nations*, not merely for the aggregate of nations, but for the aggregate of individuals composing the nations. Consequently we must sometimes translate *Gentiles*, as in Rom. ii. 14, iii. 29, Acts xiii. 48, xiv. 2, 5; and sometimes *nations* as in Rom. iv. 17, 18. The singular is always "nation," as in ch. x. 19. Paul's commission is for *all the nations*, and therefore includes Rome. **On behalf of His name**: further object of the commission of Paul, viz. that the name of Christ may be known and honoured. So Acts ix. 16, xv. 26, xxi. 13; 2 Th. i. 12; Acts iii. 16. To believe what that name implies, and to confess it, were the conditions of salvation. That this name might be on every lip and in every heart, Paul preached and lived, and was ready to die.

6. Brings Paul's readers within the sphere of his apostolic work. He was sent to lead men "in all the nations" to obey faith; and in these nations were the Christians at Rome. **Ye also**: in addition to the other nations among whom (*v.* 13) he has laboured

so long. Cp. *v.* 15: "also to you at Rome." **Called ones of Jesus Christ**: they belonged to Christ, and had been made His by a divine summons. This summons, Paul represents as given by the Father: so chs. viii. 30, ix. 24, 2 Th. ii. 14. The Gospel is God's voice calling men to Christ; and is as solemn as the voice from the burning bush, or that on the road to Damascus. They who have obeyed the call are *Christ's called ones*. Just as by the voice of Christ God made Paul an apostle and gave him a right to call himself such, so by the Gospel God gave his readers to Christ and gave them a right to call themselves His. See under ch. viii. 28. Thus Paul, while claiming his own relation to Christ, recognises that of those to whom he writes. It is better to render and punctuate as above, not *ye are called ones etc.*: for the Roman Christians came within Paul's sphere not by being called, but by being among the Gentiles.

7. The definite greeting, for which *vv.* 1—6 have prepared the way. **Beloved of God**: equivalent to "beloved by God" in 1 Th. i. 4. God's love is the source of all blessing, and the sure ground of our hope: cp. Rom. v. 6, viii. 39. Of this love, all men (ch. xi. 28, Jno. iii. 16) are objects; but only believers are conscious objects. To them it is real and living, moulding their thoughts and life. Paul knows that the love which smiles on himself smiles also on them; and that in a consciousness of the same Father's love, amid the same trials of life, both he and they rejoice and rest. **Called saints**: further description of his readers. *Saints*: not only called to be saints, but actually *holy men*. So chs. xv. 25, 26, 31, xvi. 2, 15, etc.: cp. 1 Cor. i. 2. They were objectively holy: see note below. God claimed to be henceforth the aim of their life, purposes, effort. Therefore, apart from their own conduct, they stood in a new and solemn relation to God, as men whom He had claimed for Himself. They might be, like the Corinthians, carnal; but they were still sanctified in Christ: 1 Cor. i. 2, iii. 3. To admit sin or selfishness into Christians, is sacrilege. Hence the word *saint*, their common N.T. designation, points out their duty. It points out no less their privilege. By calling us *saints*, God declares His will that we live a life of which He is the one and only aim. Therefore, since our efforts have proved that such a life is utterly beyond our power, we may take back to God the name by which He calls us, and humbly claim that it be realised by His power in our heart and life.

After describing himself, his business, and his readers, Paul adds words of greeting: **grace and peace**. "May you be objects

of the *favour* of God." This is the source of all blessing, and therefore holds the first place in N.T. salutations. *Peace:* rest arising from absence of disturbing causes within, or around, or before us: the opposite of confusion and unrest: 1 Cor. xiv. 33, Isa. lvii. 20, 21. It is a result of the favour of God. We are at rest because He smiles, and we know that He smiles, on us. **Father:** a constant title of God, as is *Lord* of Christ: cp. 1 Cor. viii. 6, Eph. iv. 5, 6. We look up to God as the Father from whom we sprang, and to Christ as the Master whose work we do. The *grace* of God is an outcome of His fatherhood. He smiles on His children. And, because we know that our *Father* smiles on us, we are at *peace*.

The **Lord Jesus Christ:** in closest relation to the Father, as joint Source with Him of *grace and peace*. This remarkable collocation of names, constant with Paul, places Christ infinitely above man and infinitely near to God. It completes the honour paid to Christ in this first sentence of the epistle.

Notice the beauty and symmetry of Paul's opening sentence. It is a crystal arch spanning the gulf between the Jew of Tarsus and the Christians at Rome. Paul begins by giving his name: he rises to the dignity of his office, and then to the Gospel he proclaims. From the Gospel he ascends to its great subject-matter, to Him who is Son of David and Son of God. From this summit of his arch he passes on to the apostleship again, and to the nations for whose good he received it. Among these nations he finds the Christians at Rome. He began to build by laying down his own claims; he finished by acknowledging theirs. The gulf is spanned. Across the waters of national separation, Paul has flung an arch whose firmly knit segments are living truths, and whose keystone is the incarnate Son of God. Over this arch he hastens with words of greeting from his Father and their Father, from his Master and their Master.

Every word increases the writer's claim upon the attention of his readers. He writes to them as one doing the work of the promised Messiah, who lived at Nazareth and died at Jerusalem. Among the servants of Christ he holds no mean place, but has been solemnly called to the first rank. He has been set apart by God for proclamation of those joyful tidings whose notes were heard from afar by the ancient prophets and still resound in the words of the sacred books. The divine mission of the prophets and the sacredness of their writings claim attention for one who announces as present what they foretold as future.

This claim is strengthened by mention of Him who is the great matter of the good news. Paul proclaims the advent of a scion of the house to which eternal royalty was promised; of One who, by divine power, by victory over death, has been separated from all others as the Son of God. This Son of David and of God is Paul's Master and theirs. By His personal call, Paul has received the rank of an apostle. This office derives lustre from the grandeur of Him by whom it was conferred. The purpose of Paul's mission is that in all nations men may obey faith. A further purpose is that the name of Christ, written in these verses in characters so splendid, may be revered and loved by all. Among these nations are Paul's readers. But he does not write in order to lead them to faith: for Christ has already made them His own by a divine call. They are objects of God's love, men whom He has claimed for Himself. Paul desires for them the smile of God, and the rest of spirit which only that smile can give. May it come to them from its only source, the common Father and the common Master.

In these words there is no mere rambling among sacred topics, no running after some great thought, no mere desire to put Christ's name into every sentence. But there is everywhere order and purpose. In *v.* 5 we find Paul standing as an apostle on the level on which he stood in *v.* 1. But how great an advance he has made! The long-foretold Gospel has given importance to the man set apart to proclaim it. The apostle has been into the presence of the Son of God; and the glory of that presence now irradiates the office received from one so great. He comes forth as an ambassador claiming for his Master the allegiance of all nations.

Observe, in this section and epistle, the facts and teaching assumed by Paul. He takes for granted the resurrection of Christ, and his own call by Christ; that Jesus claimed to be in a special sense the Son of God; that the prophets spoke from God; that their writings were sacred books; and that the Gospel is a divine call by which Christ claims men for God.

HOLINESS. The words *holy*, *hallow*, *holiness*, and *saint*, *sanctify*, *sanctification*, represent in the English Bible nearly always one Hebrew and one Greek word, this last being the constant equivalent of the former in the Greek Septuagint Version. These words, so important for understanding the Bible, the character of God, and our relation to Him, demand careful study.

The above words are found only in reference to religion. They were familiar to Jews and proselytes by their use in the O.T., and by well-known objects which were called *holy*, e.g. the Sabbath, Mount Sinai, the firstborn of man and beast, the tabernacle with its altars and vessels, the priests and their clothing, the sacrifices, consecrated houses and fields, the censers used by Korah and his company, the wall of Jerusalem, and the Person and Name of God. See Ex. xxix., xxx., xl. 1—15, Lev. xxi., xxvii., Num. iii. 11—13, and innumerable other O.T. passages.

From these various and different objects and from an idea embodied in them all, we may now derive a definition of holiness. For we notice that all belong to God. He has claimed them for His own, He requires that they be used only to advance His purposes, and according to His bidding. And in this sense, i.e. as specially claimed by God and therefore in a special sense belonging to Him, they are holy. Hence the common phrase "holiness for Jehovah." Cp. Lev. xx. 26. Holiness is written upon everything belonging to the Mosaic ritual, and is one of its most conspicuous features. It is as conspicuous as the shedding of blood, and as important.

The word *holy*, thus understood, is applied to both men and things in two ways, viz. in reference to the purpose and claim of God and to the purpose and conduct of man. Whatever God claims for His own, we may speak of as *holy* without considering whether the claim is responded to. For, whatever man may do, God's claim puts the object claimed in a new position. Men may profane it by setting God's claim at nought; but they cannot destroy the claim. It remains to condemn the men who trample it under foot. The Sabbath, temple, priesthood, were holy however polluted. But to pollute them was sacrilege, and defiance to God. This may be called objective holiness. If man's will concur with the Will of God, if the object claimed be actually devoted to Him, if to Him its entire activity tends, we have what we may call subjective holiness: as in 1 Cor. vii. 34, 1 Th. v. 23. It is described in Rom. vi. 11, "living for God, in Christ Jesus:" cp. 2 Cor. v. 15. This distinction of objective and subjective holiness is of the utmost importance. God sanctified the Sabbath and the firstborn: Gen. ii. 3, Ex. xx. 11; Num. iii. 11—51. Israel was bidden to sanctify it and them: Dt. v. 12, Jer. xvii. 22—27; Ex. xiii. 1. God and His name are holy; therefore man must hallow them: Lev. xx. 26, xxi. 8, Isa. i. 4; Lev. xxii. 32, Isa. xxix. 23.

These last quotations remind us that the word *holy* is used not only to describe the objects which God claimed for Himself but also to set forth His own nature. And the connection proves that in both cases the word represents the same idea. But it is differently applied. For the objects claimed by God are "holy for Jehovah;" whereas He is "the Holy One of Israel." When God claims to be the one aim of our existence, He not only puts us in a new position, and thus makes us objectively holy, but also reveals Himself in a new character. Henceforth we think of Him as the great Being who claims to be the aim of our every purpose and effort. By calling Himself *holy*, God announces that this claim has its root and source in a definite element of His nature. He is the beginning, and the end. All things are from Him and for Him. As thus understood, the holiness of God bears a relation to that of men analogous to the relation of the Creator to the creature.

We now see a reason for the ceremonial holiness so conspicuous in the Old Covenant. To teach men, in the only way in which they could learn it, that He claims to be the one aim of their being, God commanded certain men and things to be set apart for Himself in outward ceremonial form. These He called *holy*. When men had become familiar with the idea of holiness, thus set forth, God declared in Christ that this idea must be realised in every man and every thing, in spirit and soul and body. Hence the various holy objects in the O.T. are used in the N.T. to set forth the Christian life. We are a temple, priesthood, sacrifice: 1 Cor. iii. 16, 1 Pet. ii. 5, 9, Rom. xii. 1. Our future life will be a Sabbath-keeping: Heb. iv. 9. These were embodiments, in things, men, and time, of the idea of holiness. They set forth in symbolic form the body, spirit, and life of the people of God.

When that which exists only for God is surrounded by objects not thus consecrated, holiness becomes a setting apart for God. The more alien from God the objects around, the more conspicuous is this separation. Just so, the temple was closed to all but priests, themselves set apart from their fellows and from common life. But separation is only an accidental and subordinate idea. The word *holy* is frequently used without thought of separation, e.g. for the angels. In the world to come there will be absolute holiness, but no separation. For God's pleasure will be the aim of every word and act of His glorified sons. The idea of separation appears also in the holiness of God. For, that He is the one object of His creatures' purpose, effort, service, and worship, places Him and His Name at an infinite distance above

all others. His claim reveals the difference between the creature and the Creator.

Since sin is an erection of self into the end and rule of life, it is utterly opposed to holiness. God's holiness makes Him intolerant of sin, because sin robs Him of that which His holiness claims. Only the holy are pure, and only the pure are holy. But the words are not synonymous. Purity in the creature and opposition to sin in the Creator are the negative side of holiness. Holiness, however, is a positive attribute; and would have existed in God and in man even though there had been no sin.

Righteousness looks upon man as capable of obeying or disobeying a law; holiness, as capable of choosing and pursuing an aim, and of choosing God and His purposes to be the one aim of life. The antithesis of righteousness is transgression: that of holiness (see 2 Cor. v. 15) is self. The contrast in the one case is Right or Wrong; in the other, Mine or God's.

Already we have met the word *holy* three times. The *Scriptures* are called *holy*. For they stand in special relation to God as a divinely-given record of divinely-given revelations. The *spirit* of the incarnate Son of God was an impersonation *of holiness*: for every movement of that spirit had God for its aim. Christians are called *saints* or holy persons objectively, as claimed by God. To refuse that claim is to act as Aaron, who is called in Ps. cvi. 16 "the saint of Jehovah," would have done had he refused the priesthood. And it is their privilege to be subjectively holy.

On the whole subject, see further in my *New Life in Christ* lectures xii.—xv., and xxxii.

SECTION II

HE HAS LONG DESIRED TO PREACH TO THEM

CH. I. 8—15

In the *first* place, *I thank my God through Jesus Christ about you all, that your faith is proclaimed in all the world.* [9] *For God is my witness, whom I serve in my spirit in the Gospel of His Son, how unceasingly I make mention of you, always in my prayers* [10] *beseeching if by any means now at all a way will be*

opened for me, in the will of God, to come to you. [11] *For I long to see you, that I may impart to you some spiritual gift of grace, in order that ye may be established;* [12] *and that is, that we may be encouraged together in your midst through each other's faith, both yours and mine.* [13] *Moreover, I do not wish you to be ignorant, brethren, that frequently I purposed to come to you and was hindered till now, in order that I might have some fruit among you also, as also among the other Gentiles.* [14] *Both to Greeks and to Barbarians, both to wise men and to foolish, I am a debtor.* [15] *Hence my readiness to preach, also to you in Rome, the Gospel.*

8. After greeting the believers at Rome, Paul declares his deep and long-cherished interest in them. Many thoughts arise, one after another, in his mind. He tells us the **first**; but does not arrange the others in order, pouring forth all in one full stream of thought and feeling. So in ch. iii. 1. Paul's *first* thought here, as in nearly all his letters, is gratitude. In approaching *God*, he *first* thanks Him for blessings received, and then asks for more. **My God**: Paul's own God, with whom he has personal and individual dealings. Even when thanking God for others, he turns his back on them and alone draws near to God. Cp. 2 Cor. xii. 21. For he feels that God's goodness to his readers is personal kindness to himself. **Through**: as in *v.* 5. *Through* **Jesus Christ**: the channel of all blessing from God to man and of all thanks from man to God. Cp. ch. vii. 25, Heb. xiii. 15. **You all**: consequently throughout the epistle we have no reproof or correction. Contrast 1 Cor. i. 4, 11. **Faith**: the earliest Christian grace. The fuller description of the readers in Col. i. 4, 1 Th. i. 3, iii. 6 arose perhaps from fuller information. By thanking God for their *faith*, Paul recognised that in some fair sense it came from God. See under Rom. xii. 3. It must have made itself known by works of faith: but what these were, we are not told. **In all the world.** This warns us not to take literally, without careful examination, the universal expressions of the Bible: see under ch. v. 18. Wherever Paul goes in his travels, he hears of his readers' faith. What he hears calls forth gratitude to God: for the universality of their good name is some proof that they deserve it.

9, 10. Explanation and confirmation of the foregoing: a reason for the gratitude just expressed. Paul thanks God for their faith,

because he constantly prays for them, and because their faith is thus God's answer to his prayer and a mark of God's personal kindness to himself. Notice that Paul prays constantly for all the Churches to which he writes. In his devotions, he takes them one by one to God. Hence every blessing to them is a gift from God to him. The constancy of Paul's prayer is greater than words can tell. He therefore appeals to **God**, who **is** the only **witness** of his prayers. **Serve**: as in *v.* 25, ix. 4, xii. 1, not as in ch. i. 1: used in the Bible only for service of God, especially the priestly service of the temple. The temple was the palace of God: the priests were His domestic servants. **In the Gospel**: sphere of Paul's priestly work for God, viz. announcement of the good news about **His Son**. Important parallel in ch. xv. 16. **Spirit**: that in man which is nearest to God and most like God. See note under ch. viii. 17. **In my** *spirit:* the inner, as the Gospel is the outer, sphere of Paul's service. The service of the Jewish priests might be only bodily and mechanical. But the preaching of the Gospel was a sacrifice offered in the inmost and uppermost chamber of Paul's being. So Jno. iv. 24. This inward service, in a matter so dear to God as that of *His* own *Son*, gave solemnity to Paul's appeal. For the godless cannot appeal to God. But Paul's well-known devotion to the service of God was proof that his appeal was neither frivolous nor false. The words *whom I serve in my spirit* expound and justify the words "my God" in *v.* 8. They who in the solitude of their spirit bow down to God can appeal to Him as their God.

Paul never prays for his readers without earnestly asking to be allowed to visit them. **A-way-opened**: same word in 1 Cor. xvi. 2, 3 Jno. 2. It denotes, under the figure of a good way opened, any kind of prosperity. **Now**: a speedy visit hoped for. **At all**: uncertainty as to details. The words **if by any means** express a desire to come at any cost, and suggest difficulty and doubt. This prayer was answered in an unexpected manner. **In the will of God**: implies submission. But submission did not prevent earnest and persevering prayer. Paul's desire was to go to Rome; but he will not do so till it becomes evident that what he desires is also *the will of God*. Cp. ch. xv. 32. He also remembers that the opening of a way for him depends, not upon circumstances, but upon *God*. Cp. Jas. iv. 15.

11. Reason and motive of Paul's prayer: he wishes to do them good. **Gift-of-grace**: any mark of God's free favour. Same important word in ch. v. 15, 16, vi. 23, xi. 29: also in a technical

sense in ch. xii. 6, where see note. Cp. 1 Cor. i. 7. **Spiritual** pertaining to the Holy Spirit, probably. All inward gifts of God are wrought in man's spirit by the Spirit of God: so 1 Cor. xii. 11. And Paul hopes to be a medium through which God will **impart** such gifts to his readers at Rome. For from within those in whom the Spirit dwells flow rivers of living water: Jno. vii. 38. **Established**: enabled to stand firmly in the Christian life, in spite of influences tending to throw them down. **May be** *established:* not by Paul, but by God: Jude 24. But increased stability follows every *spiritual gift.*

12. A new thought: to do them good, is to receive good for himself. "If I impart to you a spiritual gift, making you firmer in the Christian life, both you and I will be **encouraged,** i.e. moved to Christian hope and work (same word as *exhort* in ch. xii. 1); I **by your faith and** you by **mine.** Notice the modesty of these words. Even the great apostle will receive blessing from the Roman Christians. Similar modesty in ch. xv. 14, 15.

13. Not only has Paul prayed to be allowed to see his readers, but he has **frequently purposed to come.** This proves the earnestness of his prayer. Prayers not accompanied by serious effort to obtain the blessing asked for are an empty form. **I would not have you ignorant**: so ch. xi. 25, 1 Cor. x. 1, xii. 1, 2 Cor. i. 8, 1 Th. iv. 13: it lays stress on what follows. **Hindered**: explained in ch. xv. 22. An object Paul had in view in his purpose to go to Rome, in addition to the objects described in *vv.* 11, 12, was to gather **fruit** there **as** he had done **among the other Gentiles.** His success among others was a ground of hope for success at Rome. *Fruit:* ch. vi. 21, 22, xv. 28, Gal. v. 22, Eph. v. 9, Phil. i. 11, 22, iv. 17: a good result derived from the organic outworking and growth of moral and spiritual life. To do good to others, is, according to the laws of the Kingdom of God, to receive a harvest of blessing for ourselves.

14. Greeks and Barbarians: the common Greek summary of the civilised and uncivilised nations. Its use by Paul reveals to how great an extent in his day the civilisation of the world was Greek. The culture even of Rome was of Greek origin. He writes without thought probably to which class the Romans belong. The broad distinction in his day was between those who used the Greek language and partook of Greek civilisation and those who did not. **Wise**: acquainted with arts and sciences learnt only by a special education. See note under 2 Cor. ii. 5. **Foolish**: men

of dull perception. "To those who know more, and to those who know less, than others, **I am a debtor.**" Paul received the Gospel in trust for all, without distinction of nationality or intelligence, and is therefore under obligation, both to God who entrusted it and to those for whom it was entrusted, to proclaim it to all within his reach. He is a steward of the mysteries of God: 1 Cor. iv. 1, 1 Pet. iv. 10. Therefore his efforts to do them good are but the discharge of a duty to God and to them. The civilisation and learning of the Greeks, the coarseness and ignorance of the barbarians, do not lessen this obligation. The wise need the Gospel, the foolish are capable of receiving it; and therefore both have a claim on Paul. Notice here a modest but correct view of Christian beneficence. To do all we can, is but to pay a just debt. To claim gratitude for doing good, is to mistake utterly our position and obligation.

15. Hence my readiness etc. The obligation just mentioned is another reason for Paul's desire to visit Rome. He wishes to see his readers in order to do them good, and thus to strengthen the faith they already possess. **Preach-the-Gospel:** literally to *announce good news:* cognate verb to the word *Gospel* in *v.* 1. Same word in chs. x. 15, xv. 20, 1 Cor. i. 17, etc. It may be transliterated *evangelize.*

REVIEW. "In writing to you, my first thought is gratitude to God: and I remember that all blessing comes through Christ. Wherever I go, I hear of your faith. The news fills me with thankfulness: for it is a gift of my God, and an answer to my prayers. How ceaseless are my prayers for you, is known only to Him whom in my heart of hearts I serve by proclaiming the good news of salvation through His Son. Whenever I pray for you, I pray that if well-pleasing to God I may be permitted by some means to visit you. My reason is that I desire to be a channel through which the Spirit may bestow some gift of God's favour, and thus strengthen you. Such blessing to you will be a gain to me. If I come into your midst, I shall be encouraged by your faith and you by mine. Not only do I desire, but I have often purposed, to visit you: but hitherto my apostolic work has hindered me. For I wish to sow seed at Rome, and thus reap among you a harvest of blessing such as I have gathered among others. Moreover, I wish to discharge my obligation to Him who in His undeserved favour has entrusted to me, for the good of all men, the Gospel of Christ. This felt obligation makes me ready to preach the Gospel also at Rome."

In § 1, an ambassador claimed our respect by the greatness of his business and of his Master. In § 2, a man who calls us brethren wins our affection by the warmth of his love. He thanks God because he hears good about us: and he never prays without praying for us and praying that God will enable him to see our face. For years he has been planning to make a long journey to do us good. He is sure that intercourse with us will give encouragement to him: and he looks upon our Church as a field in which he will reap a harvest of blessing. Though we have never seen him and his name is highly honoured wherever there are Christians, he calls himself our debtor. In writing these words, Paul doubtless sought only to express his feelings towards these far-off brethren. But he could not have written words more calculated to increase the attention which his foregoing words called forth. In § 1, our spirits bowed before one who stood so high in the service of so great a Master. But now the ambassador of Christ comes to us as one like ourselves. Across the waters which roll between him and us, we hear a brother's voice and see a brother's face.

SECTION III

FOR THE GOSPEL IS GOD'S POWER TO SAVE ALL THAT BELIEVE

CH. I. 16, 17

For I am not ashamed of the Gospel. For it is a power of God, for salvation, to everyone that believes, both to Jew first and to Greek. [17] *For righteousness of God is revealed in it, by faith, for faith, according as it is written, "But the righteous man by faith will live."*

Paul concluded § 2 with a new thought. He had expressed a desire to impart to his readers a spiritual gift and spiritual strength, to receive encouragement and gather fruit among them, and to discharge an obligation to them. In *v.* 15, these desires assumed the form of a wish to preach the Gospel to them.

Verse 16 gives a reason for this, viz. that the Gospel is a power of God to save. Therefore to preach it to the Christians at Rome will impart spiritual gifts and strength, will advance their salvation and thus bear fruit for Paul, and will discharge the obligation which the possession of such a Gospel laid upon him. Thus the last word of § 2 is the key-note of § 3.

16. Paul mentions first, not the nature of the Gospel, but his own feelings about it. He is ready to preach it to them because he is **not ashamed of the Gospel.** He is not ashamed of it because he knows its saving *power*. The word *shame* was perhaps suggested by the greatness of Rome and the apparent worthlessness of a mere word in a man's lips. But the thought of shame is banished by remembrance of the power and purpose of the Gospel. For Paul knew that in his words there lives and works the Creator's power, that in those words this power is put forth to save men ready to die, that his word will save all men of any nation or rank who believe it, and that all men alike need salvation. This last point will be proved in § 4. Of such a word he is *not ashamed* even in the world's great capital: and therefore he is ready to proclaim it even to the men of Rome.

Power: something able to produce results. By means of the good news, God performs works of power. So 1 Cor. i. 18, 1 Th. ii. 13. In creation a word was the instrument of God's power, and the universe is upheld by the word of the power of Christ: Ps. xxxiii. 6, 9, Heb. i. 3. The words which called Lazarus from the grave and healed the lame man at the temple gate were a *power* **of God.** Such also is the Gospel. While men speak it, the might of God produces, through the spoken word, works possible only to God. So Jas. i. 18, 1 Pet. i. 23: cp. Acts viii. 10. **Salvation**: rescue of the lost, including the whole work of God in us till we are beyond the perils of the present life: see chs. v. 10, xiii. 11. Every moment by His power God saves us from evil. **For** *salvation:* purpose and aim of the *power of God* put forth in the proclamation of the good news. **Believes**: see note under ch. iv. 25. **Everyone that** *believes* the good news, of whatever nation or degree of culture, experiences the power which saves. To others, "the word of the cross is foolishness:" 1 Cor. i. 18. Paul is ready to preach the Gospel at Rome because, to all who believe, it is a power of God to save. **Jew and Greek**: another division of men. "Greeks and Barbarians" were equal in reference to the Kingdom of God. Both were far off: Eph. ii. 13. But the Jews were "the sons of the

covenant" and "of the kingdom:" Acts iii. 25, Mt. viii. 12. They were first not only in time but in privilege: Acts xiii. 46, Rom. iii. 1. Therefore in the great day they will be first in punishment and in reward: ch. ii. 9, 10. Same contrast in Eph. ii. 17. *Greek:* any who were not Jews, as in Mk. vii. 26, Jno. vii. 35, Acts xi. 20, xiv. 1. This use of the word shows, as does *v.* 14, how completely Greek thought and life had moulded the world in which Paul moved. The word **is** denotes here as in *v.* 12, not identity, but coincidence in thought or practical identity. The word and the power are not the same, but they go together. The one is the outward form, the other is the life-giving spirit.

17. Righteousness, or *justice:* same word both in Hebrew and in Greek. It describes any object which has a standard with which it may be compared, and which agrees with that standard; that which is as it ought to be. Hence we have, in Lev. xix. 36, righteous weights and measures; in Mt. xx. 4, Col. iv. 1, righteous wages; in 2 Tim. iv. 8, a righteous judge; in Rom. ii. 5, Acts iv. 19, Jno. vii. 24, righteous conduct and judgment. Aristotle (*Nicom. Ethics* bk. v. 1. 8) defines the word *righteous* to mean "legal and equal." The righteous man treats all men on the same principle, viz. according to the standard laid down by law. And this is the common use of the word in classical Greek. God is righteous (cp. Rom. iii. 26) in that His treatment of men agrees with the principles of right and wrong admitted by all.

It was ever in the mind of the Jew that God is the Judge by whom, and with whose law, man's conduct must be compared; and that upon this comparison depends God's smile or frown, and man's life or death. Hence the phrase "righteous before God" in Lk. i. 6, Acts iv. 9. Sometimes, e.g. Dt. vi. 25, xxiv. 13, the word suggests reward from God for right action. In O.T. and N.T., that man is righteous whose conduct agrees with the Law of God, and who therefore enjoys His approval and will obtain His reward; and his condition is *righteousness.*

Righteousness **of God** is here said to be revealed in the Gospel, by faith, for faith: and this revelation of righteousness is given as an explanation of the statement that the Gospel is a power of God to save all believers. In ch. iii. 5, 25, and 26 the same phrase denotes an attribute of God: cp. "is God unrighteous?" in *v.* 5 and "Himself righteous" in *v.* 26. But it cannot have this meaning here. For, that God is righteous, was revealed, not in the Gospel, but long before: nor would such revelation explain how the Gospel is a power of God to save all who believe, or be

explained by the quotation from Habakkuk immediately following. Moreover, such manifestation of righteousness could not, as we read in ch. iii. 21, be said to be "apart from law." In ch. x. 3 we read of men who, "not knowing the righteousness of God, and seeking to set up their own, did not submit to the righteousness of God;" where again the phrase before us cannot describe an attribute of God. Nor can it in 2 Cor. v. 21. But in Ph. iii. 9 Paul writes, "not having a righteousness of my own, that which is from law, but that which is through faith of Christ, the righteousness from God on the condition of faith." The closeness of the parallel and the good sense given leave no room to doubt that these last words describe the *righteousness of God* in Rom i. 17, iii. 21, 22, x. 3. As given by Him, it is called *God's righteousness*, in contrast to any righteousness derived from obedience to law and therefore having its source in man.

Revealed, or *unveiled:* used in N.T. only of a veil lifted up by God; and only of truth actually apprehended by man, thus differing from the word *manifest* in *v.* 19, iii. 21. The Jews sought God's approval; but it was hidden from their eyes: cp. ch. ix. 30, 31. The good news proclaims (cp. ch. iii. 27) the new law of faith; and thus brings to light, to all who believe, the long-sought blessing. The revelation is made, from God's side, through the Gospel: it is received, on man's side, **by** (literally *from*) **faith,** i.e. by belief of the preached word. To those who do not believe, the Gospel is still veiled: so 2 Cor. iv. 3. **For faith:** purpose of God in choosing faith as the means of this revelation of righteousness: cp. *v.* 5, "for obedience of faith." In order that faith in Him may be the abiding state of His servants, God proclaims, "He that believes shall be saved;" and thus makes known to all believers a state in which God's favour is enjoyed. The revelation is *by faith*, that it may lead *to faith.*

This verse explains the statement in *v.* 16 that the good news is a power of God to save all that believe. As we shall see in § 4, man was perishing, and his perdition was a just punishment of his sin. Now a righteous judge cannot rescue a criminal from a righteous sentence. But, in the Gospel, God proclaims a new law, viz. "He that believes shall be saved;" and thus bestows His own favour on all that believe. The believer is now, by the gift of God, righteous. He has "obtained righteousness, even the righteousness which is from faith:" ch. ix. 30. And the righteous Judge breaks off the fetters, and sets the

prisoner free. How the "power of God" works out "salvation for everyone that believes," we shall learn in chs. vi. and viii. To this salvation, *righteousness* as a gift *of God* is a necessary preliminary condition.

As it is written etc.: not given in proof of the foregoing assertion, which rests simply on the word and authority of Christ; (see under ch. iii. 22;) but pointing out a harmony between the new Gospel and the ancient Scriptures. Habakkuk (ch. i.) mourns the vileness and lawlessness around; and foresees as its retribution rapid and complete conquest by the Chaldeans. He appeals to the character of God, and expresses for himself and the godly in Judæa an assurance of deliverance grounded on God's character, "We shall not die:" ch. i. 12. The prophet betakes himself to the watch-tower, and awaits the reply of God. In solemn tones God proclaims the destruction of the proud Chaldeans, and declares that while others perish the "righteous man by his faith shall live:" ch. ii. 4. The Hebrew word rendered *faith*, although cognate to the ordinary verb meaning "to believe," denotes, not belief, but faithfulness, that constancy and stability of character which make a man an object of reliance to others. These quoted words assume that faithfulness is an element of the righteous man's character, and declare that by his faithfulness he shall survive. It is however quite evident that this faithfulness arises from faith, i.e. from belief of the promise of God. Indeed, Hab. i. 12 is an expression of faith. The prophet is unmoved because he relies upon God. In Hab. ii. 4, the words *shall live* refer primarily to the present life. When others perish, the righteous will escape. But in this sense the promise was only partially fulfilled. And the incompleteness of its fulfilment in the present life was a sure pledge of a life to come.

Thus, through the lips of the prophet, God proclaims, in face of a coming storm, that the righteous man will survive by his faith. In Christ, God spoke again. In face of the tempest so soon to overwhelm the Jewish nation, and some day to overwhelm the world, He announced that the man of faith shall live. And Paul, echoing this announcement, calls attention to the harmony between God's word in Christ and His word in Habakkuk. This harmony, amid so much divergence, confirms the words both of Habakkuk and of Paul and of Christ. The omission by Paul of the word *his* in Hab. ii. 4 is unimportant: for evidently it is **by** his own **faith** that **the righteous man**

will live. The omission makes prominent that the righteous man is a man of faith. In Hab. ii. 4 the words "by his faith" must be connected with "shall live;" and are put first for the sake of emphasis. And this gives good sense in Rom. ii. 17. But the difference is unimportant. We are told that the man who will survive is *righteous* and has *faith*. This is in remarkable harmony with Paul's assertion that the Gospel is a power of God for salvation to all that believe.

The assertion, here made, that God accepts as righteous all that believe the Gospel, is the foundation-stone of this epistle. It is stated without proof. With what right, we will inquire under ch. iii. 22, where we shall find a restatement of this doctrine.

DIVISION I. ALL ARE GUILTY

CHS. I. 18—III. 20

SECTION IV

FOR GOD IS ANGRY WITH ALL SIN

CH. I. 18—32

For there is revealed God's anger from heaven upon all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, of those who hold down the truth in unrighteousness: [19] *because that which is known of God is manifest among them: for God manifested it to them.* [20] *For the invisible things of Him, from* the *foundation of* the *world, being perceived through the things made, are clearly seen, viz. His eternal power and divinity; that they may be without excuse,*

[21] *because, having come to know God, not as God did they glorify* Him *or gave thanks; but they became vain in their reasonings, and their heart without understanding was darkened.* [22] *Professing to be wise, they became foolish;* [23] *and they changed the glory of the incorruptible God for a likeness of an image of corruptible man and birds and quadrupeds and creeping things.*

[24] *For which cause God gave them up, in the desires of their hearts, to uncleanness, that their bodies be dishonoured among themselves,* [25] *men who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and reverced and served the creature rather than Him that created, who is blessed for ever. Amen.*

[26] *Because of this, God gave them up to passions of dishonour. For both their females exchanged the natural use for that against nature;* [27] *and in like manner the males, having left the natural use of the female, burned in their lust one for another, males with males working out unseemliness, and receiving in themselves the necessary recompense of their error.*

[28] *And, according as they did not approve to have God in* their *understanding, God gave them up to a disapproved mind, to do the things not fitting;* [29] *being filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness, covetousness, evil; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, an evil disposition; whisperers,* [30] *evil speakers, hateful to God, wanton, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil things, without obedience to parents,* [31] *without understanding, without fidelity to covenants, without affection, without mercy;* [32] *men who, knowing the decree of God that they who practise such things are worthy of death, not only do them but are pleased with those that practise* them.

This section confirms *v.* 17 by proving something without which it would not be true, viz. that all men are under the anger of God. Verse 17 explained how the Gospel is a power to save all that believe, by saying that in it is revealed a divinely-given conformity to the Law. This explanation rests on an assumption that all men capable of believing the good news are, apart from it, destitute of God's favour. Otherwise, a revelation of his favour will not save them, but will bring to light only what they already possess. Therefore, in order to give force to *v.* 17, this assumption must be proved. Otherwise, the force of *v.* 16, which gave a

reason for Paul's readiness to preach at Rome, will not be felt: for unless the Romans need salvation, the Gospel's power to save will not prompt Paul to bring it to them. Consequently, the entire weight of *vv.* 16, 17, which contain a summary of the epistle, rests upon the assumption that all men are, apart from the Gospel, under the anger of God. Paul's earnest efforts to preach to all men the good news of salvation were prompted by his deep conviction of the lost state of all.

In DIV. I. Paul asserts, and then proves, God's anger against all sin. In § 4, he proves it in reference to the Gentiles; in §§ 5—7, in reference to the Jews. He shows (§ 8) that this is consistent with the privileges conferred on the Jews; and (§ 9) with the Jewish Scriptures. He assumes in chs. ii. 1, iii. 9, 19 that all men are sinners; and therefore draws, in ch. iii. 19, 20, the inference that all men are guilty before God.

The argument of this section presents peculiar difficulties. Its proofs are taken from the life and thought of the heathen in Paul's day, well known to him and his readers but not to us. We may in part reproduce it from ancient writers and from the analogy of modern heathenism. But we are not sure of the extent to which the statements of the old writers were true of the mass of the population, and of the degree to which modern heathenism resembles that which surrounded Paul. Consequently, we have no firm hold of the facts on which his reasoning rests; and therefore we cannot feel its full force.

A study of it will however be of great profit. We shall understand the writer's conclusions, and the principles on which he argues. These we shall compare with what we see in ourselves and in the world around and with what we read in ancient literature; and we shall find that they shed light on some of the most mysterious problems of human nature.

18. Not only is "righteousness of God revealed" in the Gospel but elsewhere **anger of God is revealed,** or *unveiled*, i.e. brought to the knowledge of men. *Anger*, or *wrath:* an emotion or disposition which prompts us to punish, the opposite of "grace." It is common to God and men: cp. Eph. iv. 26. For the most part, it is now hidden in the breast of God; but it will burst forth upon the wicked "in the day of anger and revelation of the righteous judgment of God:" Rom. ii. 5. Paul here says that this anger is already being *revealed* or made known; but in what way he does not, in *v.* 18, tell us. The Jews read the anger of God in the pages of the Old Testament. But of this there

is no hint here. Consequently, we must wait for, and in *vv.* 24—32 we shall find, another revelation of the anger of God. It is revealed, not like the Gospel by a voice which speaks on earth, but directly **from heaven**, whence God from His throne looks down **upon all ungodliness**. Notice two aspects of sin: *ungodliness* or want of respect for God, and *unrighteousness* or want of conformity to the law laid down for man's conduct. Every sin deserves both names. But in some, as in *vv.* 21—23, the *ungodliness*, in others, as in *vv.* 24—32, the *unrighteousness* is more conspicuous. **All unrighteousness of men**: rather than "all unrighteous men," making prominent the exact object of God's anger, viz. the sin rather than the sinner. Many and various forms of sin alike call forth the anger of God. **Of those who etc.**: further description of those with whom God is angry, giving the special aspect of sin which provokes God's anger. All sinners **hold down** or *hold back*, i.e. resist, **the truth**: they prevent it from attaining its purpose. Sin is therefore positive resistance to God.

Truth: correspondence between a reality and a declaration which professes to set it forth. Words are true when they correspond with objective reality: persons and things are true when they correspond with their profession. Hence a *truth* is a declaration which has corresponding reality, or a reality which is correctly set forth. Since God is Himself the great reality, that which correctly sets forth His nature is pre-eminently *the Truth*. Paul will prove that the heathen have the truth. It was designed to mould and raise their thought and life; but they prefer *unrighteousness*, and thus *hold down the truth*.

The rest of § 4 explains, accounts for, and proves, the assertion of *v.* 18. It falls naturally into the following divisions: God is angry with all sin (*a*) because He made Himself known to men, *vv.* 19, 20; (*b*) but they refused to honour Him and fell into the folly of idolatry, *vv.* 21—23; (*c*) therefore God gave them up to dishonour, *v.* 24; (*d*) men who put the folly of idolatry in place of the truth of God, *v.* 25; (*e*) therefore God gave them up to dishonour and shame, *vv.* 26, 27; (*f*) they refused to know God, and God gave them up to all kinds of sin, *vv.* 28—32. Thus (*d*) and (*e*) are parallel to, and develop, (*b*) and (*c*).

19. Because they know better, God is angry with these ungodly and unrighteous men. **That which is known of God**: His nature so far as it was *known* to the heathen. For to them Paul evidently refers: see *v.* 23. **Manifest**: set conspicuously before

men's eyes, whether they see it or not. Same word in ch. ii. 28, 1 Cor. iii. 13, xi. 19, xiv. 25: cognate verb below, *made-manifest*, and in iii. 21, xvi. 26, 2 Cor. v. 10, 11, etc.: another cognate verb in Rom. vii. 13, Jno. i. 5, v. 35, translated *to shine*. The word *revealed* denotes that which is actually known: see under *v.* 17. **For God etc.**; explains the foregoing by an historical fact. God wrote His own name before the eyes of men that all might read it. The statement in *v.* 18 is true of all men. But *v.* 19, which begins the proof that all men have the truth, suggests the Gentiles, about whom alone there could be any doubt. This reference is the more natural because the Gentiles were the mass of mankind.

20. Proof of the foregoing. From the fact that the Gentiles actually know God, Paul infers that He manifested Himself to them. **The invisible things of Him**: the existence and nature of the unseen God, equivalent to "that which is known of God," and including **His eternal power and** all that is involved in His **divinity. From** the **creation of** the **world**: a note of time, as in Mk. xiii. 19, x. 6. This measurement of time is chosen because by the works of creation God reveals His otherwise unseen nature. Notice here a revelation of God more widely spread, and earlier, than that of the Old Covenant. God's works sprang from, and correspond with, His nature; and therefore they reveal it. **Through the things made** the unseen Worker is **clearly-seen; being-perceived** by the eye of the mind, which looks through the visible to that which is beyond and above it. *Divinity*: the whole of that which goes to make up our idea of God, all that in which God differs from us, including *His eternal power*. In Nature, this eternal God, so mighty and so different from us, is actually seen and known by men. Paul's readers would judge of the truth of this assertion. And, if true, *v.* 19 also is true. That men read in Nature the name of God, proves that it was written there by God. Therefore, since whatever God does He does with design, we infer that God wrote His name on the page of Creation in order that men might read it and thus know God. Just as God revealed Himself to the Jews through the lips of inspired men, so He also revealed Himself to the Gentiles in the thousand voices of the material world.

That they might be without excuse: purpose of God in thus revealing His nature, viz. in order to leave men without excuse for dishonouring Him. This statement is evidently true. For all that comes from God must have a purpose. And the purpose of God's revelation of Himself in Nature could not be mere

communication of knowledge: for knowledge is useless unless it lead to something beyond itself. Nor could its immediate purpose be to lead men to glorify God. For, as we shall see, man was fast bound in sin, and therefore unable to glorify God: and this revelation could not break his fetters. Its only possible result was a consciousness of guilt for dishonouring God. And, if so, this must have been its designed result. Therefore, apart from the authority of Paul, we are compelled by the facts of the case to accept his assertion that God revealed Himself in Nature in order to leave man without excuse for forgetting God. For the same purpose, the Law was given to the Jews: ch. iii. 19. These revelations had, however, a further purpose of mercy and salvation. By evoking consciousness of guilt, they prepared a way for (*v.* 17) a revelation of righteousness. But consciousness of guilt was all that they were able directly to produce; and is therefore spoken of as the end for which they were given.

Summary of **18 - 20.** The heathen knew God's nature from His works. From this Paul infers that God made it known to them; and that He did so in order to remove from them all excuse for ungodliness and ingratitude. This proves that God desires man's reverence and thanks; and proves that they who refuse to honour God resist the truth which God has revealed.

The assertion that through His works God was known to the heathen is abundantly confirmed by the literature of the ancient world. Of writers known to Paul's readers, we notice that both Plato and Cicero appeal to the material world as manifestly a work of an intelligent Creator. See especially Plato's *Timæus* pp. 28—30 and bk. ii. of Cicero's *Nature of the Gods*, quoted on pp. 16—19 of my *Through Christ to God.*

21—23. Reason why they were without excuse, or the conduct which God made inexcusable by this revelation of Himself. The word **know** is so indefinite, especially with a personal object, that Paul could correctly say that the heathen *knew* **God**, and, as in Gal. iv. 8, 1 Th. iv. 5, that they did not know God. To what extent *they knew God*, he has already stated in *v.* 20. **Glorify**: to welcome as an object of admiration, and by word or act to express admiration for the object glorified. See note under *v.* 23. The heathen did not give to God the admiration and expressions of admiration which from His manifestation of Himself in Nature they knew that He rightfully claimed. *Nor did they* **give thanks** for His kindness to them. Instead of giving to God admiration and gratitude, they reasoned about Him in a way which could

lead to no good result, and their useless reasonings reacted upon themselves: **they became vain** (see under ch. viii. 20) **in their reasonings, and their heart,** which was **without understanding,** lost the light needful for apprehension of God and *became* **darkened.** So always. The eye which refused to see lost to some extent the power of sight.

The *heart* is the inmost centre of man. Hence the metaphors in Mt. xii. 40, 2 Sam. xviii. 14, Jonah ii. 3, Ex. xv. 8. It is the seat of the understanding, and the source of the thoughts, desires, emotions, words, and actions; the motive power of human life, the helm of the human ship, from which the man looks out on the world around and shapes his course. Whatever is in the heart rules the conduct. Cp. *v.* 24, x. 1, 9, Mt. xiii. 15, Eph. i. 18, Mt. xv. 18f, 1 Cor. ii. 9, iv. 5, Heb. iv. 12. The modern distinction of head and heart is not found in the Bible. The heart, never the head, is the seat of the intelligence. *Their heart*, not *hearts:* so ch. vi. 12, 1 Cor. vi. 19f; according to Greek usage. Each has one heart, and each one's heart is looked at singly.

22, 23. Proof that their heart was without understanding, and darkened. **Professing to be wise**: a ludicrous contrast to their folly and their worship of animals instead of God.

Glory: admiration evoked by grandeur real or apparent, and expressing itself in words or actions. In this subjective sense, it is used in chs. iv. 20, xi. 36, xv. 7, xvi. 27: cp. Jno. v. 41, 44, xii. 43. In classical Greek, the word denotes an opinion, the impression an object makes on the mind of a beholder. But in the Greek Bible it denotes frequently the objective quality which evokes admiration, i.e. manifested grandeur. *The glory* **of God** denotes here and ch. vi. 4, ix. 23, Tit. ii. 13, Rev. xviii. 1, xxi. 11, 23 the manifested grandeur of God, so calculated to evoke His creatures' admiration. In ch. xv. 7, 1 Cor. x. 31, Ph. i. 11, the same phrase denotes admiration for God evoked by His manifested grandeur. Cp. "glory of the Lord" in Lk. ii. 9, 2 Cor. iii. 18. Men glorify God when they receive Him as an object of their admiration, and when, by words or acts, they make Him known to others to be the object of their admiration. See also under Rom. iii. 23, v. 2.

To such depth of folly fell the men to whom Paul refers that they put aside the splendour of God, incapable of decay, and put in place of it an image of men and animals doomed to decay. The contrast between **incorruptible** (see under ch. ii. 7) and **corruptible** puts their folly in clearest light. **Image**: a concrete

imitation. **Likeness**: the generic quality in which one image is *like* another: cp. chs. v. 14, vi. 5, viii. 3, Ph. ii. 7. With this abstract quality of *an image* **of** *a* perishing **man** is contrasted the outshining grandeur of the immortal God. **And of birds and quadrupeds and creeping things**: further marks of their folly. The objects of their worship pass before us in slow procession, and increase our wonder at the folly of those who turn from God to worship imitations of these brute creatures. We see the principle of veneration so deeply seated in them that they must worship something: and so foolish are they that these images are fairer in their eyes than the Creator of the universe.

The facts of idolatry here asserted lie before us in the writings and relics of antiquity. Statues of men were worshipped by the Greeks: and the mummies of birds and reptiles, from the temples of Egypt, fill our museums. And, when Paul wrote, scarcely a serious voice had been raised in heathendom against this folly.

The clearness of the reasoning of the Greeks about other matters makes more conspicuous their failure in this all-important matter. That they saw not their folly, reveals their blindness.

Verses 21—23 prove that the heathen are without excuse for their idolatry: *v.* 20 asserts that in order to leave them without excuse God manifested Himself to them in nature. In other words, the only possible result of this manifestation was its designed result. But this was not its ultimate aim. Nature, like the Law, (see Gal. iii. 24,) was a guardian slave to lead men to Christ.

24. Divinely-ordained result and punishment of their idolatry. **Gave-up**: handed over into the power of another; as in chs. iv. 25, vi. 17, viii. 32. **To uncleanness**: same word in ch. vi. 19, Eph. iv. 19: the enemy into whose hands **God** *gave* **them** *up*. It is further specified as a defilement characterised by having **their bodies dishonoured among themselves**, i.e. one with another. Still further details in *vv.* 26, 27. Notice that sin is here represented as an enemy against whom the sinner is unable to protect himself: so ch. vii. 23. Surrender to this awful foe is the divinely-inflicted penalty of turning from God to idols. This surrender took place **in the desires** (see under ch. vi. 12) **of their hearts.** They longed for things around, often for bad things: and, full of desires they could not control, they were given up to shameful mutual pollution. In this surrender to their enemies the victims acquiesced: Eph. iv. 19. Fortunately the surrender was not necessarily final. Many of Paul's readers had once been given up to similar sins: but in the land of bondage they had cried for deliverance, and

their cry had been heard: so 1 Cor. vi. 9—11. We shall find that this verse is the centre, and contains the kernel, of the whole section.

25. Another indignant delineation, parallel to that in *vv.* 21—23, of the sin of idolatry so terribly punished. **The truth** (see under *v.* 18) **of God**: "His eternal power and divinity," viewed as a reality correctly set forth in Nature. **The lie**: outward form without any corresponding reality. Notice the awful contrast: *the Truth of God . . . the Lie.* The heathen **exchanged** their divinely-given knowledge of the supreme reality for the unreality and error and deception of idolatry. **Revered**: stronger than "glorified" in *v.* 21. They made imitations of animals an object of their lowly adoration. **And served**: as in *v.* 9. It suggests the ritual of idolatry. It is evident that they worshipped **the creature** only, and **Him that created** not at all. But Paul uses the milder words **rather than** in order to make their folly the more evident by comparing the objects chosen and refused. To *bless*, is to speak good to, or of, a person; the meaning in each case being determined by the relation of the persons concerned. God blesses us by declaring the good He will do us: and His word conveys the good to us. We bless God by declaring how good He is: Lk. i. 64, ii. 28. God **is blessed**: to endless ages an unceasing song will proclaim His goodness. **Amen**: a Hebrew word denoting *certainly*, and adopted into N.T. Greek. It is translated *verily* (A.V. and R.V.) in Jno. iii. 3, 5, 11, etc. At the end of a prayer, it expresses desire for an answer. Cp. Jer. xi. 5, and xxviii. 6 where its meaning is explained, Num. v. 22, Dt. xxvii. 15; also 2 Cor. i. 20, Rev. iii. 14.

Paul has been describing the folly of the heathen, and watching their worship and its degrading and perishing objects. Weary with the sight, he lifts his eyes to heaven. To the eye of faith appears the eternal throne, surrounded by a host of happy and intelligent worshippers. From afar, their hallelujahs fall upon his ear: and he knows that those songs will rise **for ever**, literally *to the ages*, the successive periods of the future. The glorious vision reveals to him the madness of the idolaters around. From Him whom angels worship, they turn to their own perishing imitations of perishing men and animals. Paul cannot repress a tribute of honour to the dishonoured Creator. While he listens to the anthem, which he knows will be eternal, he joins the chorus, and cries *Amen*. Cp. chs. ix. 5, xi. 36, xvi. 27; Rev. v. 14.

Notice various phrases describing man's conception of God,

That which is known of God describes Him as apprehended by men. *The invisible things of Him:* because, though placed by God within reach of the piercing glance of man's mind, the nature of God is beyond the range of his eye. *The glory of God:* as calculated to evoke man's admiration, in contrast to the contemptible forms of heathen worship. *The truth of God:* a conception corresponding with reality, in contrast to the unreality of everything belonging to idolatry.

26, 27. Further exposition of the assertion in *v.* 24. Notice the stately repetition: **because of this, God gave them up to passions of dishonour. Females . . . males:** terms applicable to animals. They were unworthy to be called women and men. The degradation of **their** *females*, among whom modesty lingers last, is put first, as the surest mark of national disgrace. That these pictures are true, the pages of ancient writers afford decisive and sad proof. The impurity of the Greeks was a great feature of their national life: and it seems to have been, in Paul's day, equalled at Rome. **And receiving etc.:** a comment on the foregoing, explaining *God gave them up* and indicating the main argument of the section. **In themselves:** in their own bodies dishonoured by themselves. **The recompense:** the self-inflicted shame which is, by God's just appointment, the **necessary** result of turning from God to idols. In other words, the personal degradation which inevitably accompanies idolatry is God's condemnation and punishment of it, and a revelation (*v.* 18) of His anger against idolaters.

28—32. Other immoral consequences of idolatry. **According as:** God's conduct to them corresponding with theirs to Him. **They did not approve:** they weighed the matter in their mind, and deliberately resolved not to make God an object of their thought. Notice, a third time, **God gave them up.** The repetition lays solemn emphasis on their punishment. **Disapproved mind:** a mind tested and found worthless. They put to the test the question of giving God a place in their mind, and rejected it: and God gave them up to a mind weighed in the balances and found wanting. **To do the things not fitting:** God's purpose in giving them up to a disapproved mind. He resolved that forgetfulness of Himself should be followed by sin, and thus made this sequence, as stated in *v.* 27, inevitable. It became inevitable by the withdrawal of those divine influences which alone can save men from sin. **Filled with all unrighteousness:** state of heart from which spring all kinds of sin. **Wickedness:** that which injures others. Satan is "the wicked one:" 1 Jno. ii. 13.

Coveteousness: desire for more than our share. **An evil-disposition**: that which prompts men to look at everything in a bad light, and to turn everything to a bad use. **Hateful-to-God**: or *hating God*. The former accords with Greek use, and gives a good sense. It is a comment on what goes before. **Wanton**: those who do what they like, without considering whether they trample under foot the rights, the property, or the lives, of others: such was once Paul: 2 Tim. i. 13. **Men who, knowing etc.**: recalling *v.* 21, and emphasising a chief thought of this section. The Greeks and Romans knew that the general principles of morality had a superhuman source; and that to sin against these was to resist a higher power. See under ch. ii. 15. **Are pleased with etc.**: last and darkest count in this catalogue of sins. Many commit sin, carried away by selfishness or passion, who condemn it in others. To take pleasure in the sin of one's neighbour, shows a love of sin, not for some further gain, but for its own sake.

Abundant literature of the ancient world attests the truth of the above picture of those among whom Paul lived.

REVIEW. The argument in *vv.* 16, 17 implies that all men are, apart from the Gospel, exposed to the anger of God. As a first step in proof of this, Paul asserts, in *v.* 18, that God is angry with all sin because all sin is resistance to revealed truth. Of this assertion, the remainder of § 4 is explanation and proof. To prove that God is angry with all sin, Paul adduces three facts: 1. That, by means of His works, the Gentiles know something about God; 2. That, instead of giving Him honour and thanks, they bowed down to images; 3. That they are guilty of shameful immorality.

From Fact 1, Paul infers that God made Himself known to the Gentiles in order to leave them without excuse for ungodliness and ingratitude. This inference, we will further examine. We learn from their writings that Plato, Cicero, and others knew something about God, and that in His works they read His name and nature. Therefore, by creating these works, God made Himself known to them. And, since whatever God does He does with design, we inferred under *v.* 20 that God created the material universe in order through it to reveal Himself to men; and that He did so, not to satisfy curiosity, but with a further moral purpose. We ask now, For whom did God form this moral purpose? For the philosophers only? Did He write His name in letters which only they could understand? God reveals Himself, not to the wise and great, but to those of every degree

of culture who sincerely seek Him: Mt. xi. 25. If He revealed Himself to Plato, He must have done so to thousands of others in all positions of life. We therefore infer that God created the material universe in order that it might be a revelation of Himself to the whole human race, and that this revelation was within reach of all who honestly sought the truth; and that the nature of God thus revealed was in some measure known to all who did not shut their eyes to it. To this knowledge of God, Paul appeals in Acts xiv. 17, xvii. 24: see also Ps. xix. 2, Wisdom xiii. 1—9. The last quotation and the work quoted are of great value as a record of Jewish thought before the appearance of Christ.

In *v.* 20 Paul asserts that the moral purpose of God's revelation of Himself in Nature was to leave men without excuse for ungodliness; and, in ch. iii. 19, that with the same purpose the Law was given to Israel. This purpose was to some extent attained. For in the best Gentile writings there breathes a consciousness of God.

That God revealed Himself in Nature in order to take away excuse for ungodliness and ingratitude, indicates that He will punish such forgetfulness of Himself; and is therefore a revelation of His *anger* (*v.* 18) *against all ungodliness.*

Fact 2 is introduced, in *vv.* 21—23, as a description of the actual conduct which God made inexcusable by this revelation of Himself. In the ritual of heathenism, Paul shows the inexplicable folly of idolaters. He does not appeal to their folly as a proof of God's anger against them—for of this He has more convincing proof—but only as an aggravation of the sin of forgetting God. But so great is the folly of idolatry that we can account for it only as punitive blindness. So Paul explains, quoting O.T., the folly of Israel: ch. xi. 8—10. It is therefore a mark of God's anger and of coming punishment.

Similarly, Fact 3, the deep shame of the heathen, can be accounted for only on the supposition that *God* in His anger *gave them up* to a hostile and immoral power. Thus in each of these facts, taken by itself, we have proof of God's anger against the persons referred to.

But this is not all. In the words *God gave them up* Paul solemnly and repeatedly asserts that Fact 3 is a result of Fact 2 taken in connection with Fact 1; i.e. that the deep shame of the heathen is a divinely-ordained result of their idolatry. If this be so, the proof afforded by the facts taken singly is immensely increased by their connection: and the immorality of the heathen

becomes an unquestionable and fearful proof of the anger of God against those who forget Him.

Of this solemn and repeated assertion, Paul gives no proof. To his readers, proof that idolatry fostered inchastity was needless. And I venture to suggest that he singled out this one sin as in a special sense a manifestation of divine anger because these unnatural crimes were almost universal, and yet were universally known to be wrong. Of each of these statements, we have proof in the literature of his day. Indeed, occasional attempts to excuse current practices, betray a secret misgiving. Now, if the mass of the heathen in Paul's day were guilty of a sin from which nature recoils, this sin was, by its universality and its universal self-condemnation, a special mark of the anger of God. Its universality implies a wide-spread cause: and the cause is not far to seek. Put together these facts: a universal manifestation of God, designed to leave men without excuse for ungodliness; a universal turning from God to the inexplicable folly of idolatry; a universal sin which all condemn. Each of these is a mark of God's anger against sin. But they are inseparable: where we find one we find the others. Their inseparable connection cannot be accidental. We therefore infer, as Paul here asserts, that the universal rejection of the universal revelation, and the universal shame, are cause and effect. And, just as from the connection of cause and effect in the material world we infer the existence of an intelligent Creator, so from this moral cause and effect we now infer that God is the moral Governor of the universe and is determined to punish those who refuse Him homage.

If the above exposition be correct, the solemn and repeated words *God gave them up* are Paul's own explanation of the statement in *v.* 18, *God's anger is revealed.* By making known His own greatness and power, and by giving up to folly and shame those who forget Him, God reveals plainly, to all who have eyes to see, His *anger against ungodliness and unrighteousness.* Since this revelation comes from the Maker and Ruler of the world, it may be said to be *from heaven.* After mentioning one sin which was so remarkable a proof of God's anger, Paul mentions others as a further result, and therefore a further proof, of the same.

The above argument disproves the teaching of the Epicureans, that anger is inconsistent with deity, and that the gods care not for man's conduct. See Acts xvii. 18 and Cicero *On the Nature of the Gods* bk. i. 17. The opposite of this, Paul has proved; not so much by formal argument, as by pointing to a chain of moral

sequences involving punishment already being inflicted on the ungodly.

Notice the intense reality of this section. There is no artificial order: but there is that higher order in which living thought finds its own correct expression. The writer turns again and again from the sin to the shame and from the shame to the sin. Before his searching and continued gaze, the sin becomes more sinful and the shame more deeply shameful.

This epistle was probably written from Corinth: see Introd. iv. And nowhere did the shamelessness of idolatry parade itself more openly than at Corinth. The argument is therefore a mark of genuineness.

The chief DOCTRINAL RESULTS of this section are:—

1. Paul's view of Natural Theology. With him, God's revelation of Himself in Nature holds a place in the moral training of the Gentiles analogous to that of the Law in the training of Israel. A remarkable coincidence in the only two recorded addresses of Paul to heathens, Acts xiv. 15, xvii. 24; each of which begins by appealing to the creation of the world. To the Jews, he begins by quoting the Old Testament. In each case, he appeals to an earlier revelation given to prepare a way for the Gospel; and thus seeks to call forth that consciousness of guilt without which the need of the Gospel is not felt. The revelation in Nature would probably bear its chief fruit in those Gentiles who heard the Gospel. While listening to it, they would condemn themselves, not for rejecting Christ, of whom they had never heard, but for disregarding a revelation which had been before their eyes from childhood. And, just as the Law retains its value even for those who have accepted the Gospel, so the worth of the revelation in Nature remains to those who behold the glory of God in the face of Christ. That God reveals Himself in Nature, raises Natural Science to a sacred study, and gives to it its noblest aim.

2. We learn that, by the just judgment of God, godlessness, folly, and shame go together. Happily these do not exist in the same forms, or to the same extent, with us as with these old heathens. But the principle remains. Are not they guilty of incredible folly who prefer to direct their highest thought and effort to the perishing objects around, rather than to those which will never pass away? And is not this folly chargeable to all who forget God? Again, just in proportion as the image of God fades from our view do we fall into thoughts, motives, and practices, which for very shame we must hide from our fellows. Human

nature is the same. The principles here asserted attest themselves before our eyes and in our hearts. The inevitable connection of godlessness, folly, and sin proclaims in words we cannot misunderstand that God is angry with those who forget Him. Even Socrates, in Xenophon's *Memoirs* bk. iv. 4. 24, says that the fact that certain sins produce their own punishment proves that the law which forbids them is from God.

3. The real nature of sin. It is not a mere act, but an adverse power against which, unaided by God, man is powerless. It has allies in our own hearts. The deep shame of the heathen is with Paul fully accounted for by the fact that God gave them up to sin. Of this, all else is a necessary result: man's own moral strength to resist even gross sin is not reckoned for a moment. Hence Paul's indignation is called forth, not by their lust and wickedness, but by their dishonour to God. Of this, their lust is but the punishment. We shall therefore no longer look with Pharisaic wonder on cases of deep depravity. The enormities of crime are explained. We see in them the fearful nature and power of sin, and God's anger against forgetfulness of Himself. We shall be slow to condemn, quick to pity. In the depravity of others we shall see what ourselves would become if the strong hand of our God were withdrawn. And, in the presence of foes so tremendous, we shall not venture away from our ark of safety.

SECTION V

GOD'S ANGER AGAINST SIN IS WITHOUT RESPECT OF PERSONS

CH. II. 1—11

For which cause thou art without excuse, O man, whoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest the other thou condemnest thyself: for thou that judgest dost practise the same things. [2] *And we know that the judgment of God is, according to truth, upon them that practise such things.* [3] *But reckonest thou this, O man, that judgest them that practise such things and dost them, that*

thou wilt escape the judgment of God? [4] *Or, the riches of His kindness and the forbearance and the longsuffering, dost thou despise, not knowing that the kindness of God is leading thee towards repentance?* [5] *But according to thy hardness and a heart without repentance thou art treasuring for thyself anger in a day of anger and of revelation of God's righteous judgment,* [6] *"Who will give back to each one according to his works."* [7] *To them who by way of perseverance in good work seek glory and honour and incorruptibility,* He will give *eternal life:* [8] *but to them of mercenary spirit and disobedient to the truth but obedient to unrighteousness* [9] shall there be *anger and fury, affliction and helplessness, upon every soul of man that works out evil, of Jew first and of Greek;* [10] *but glory and honour and peace to everyone that works good, to Jew first and to Greek.* [11] *For there is no respect of persons with God.*

In § 4, Paul proved that God is angry with the heathen, by pointing to the cause of His anger, viz. the contempt shown in turning from Him to idols, and by pointing to a terrible result of it, viz. their shameful immorality. From this he now draws (§ 5) an unexpected and universal inference, viz. that God is angry not only with the Gentiles but with all men. This universal inference he defends against supposed exceptions on the ground of God's kindness, by asserting in *vv.* 3—10 that God's judgment is impartial. And he will show that neither (§ 6) the gift of the Law nor (§ 7) circumcision affords any ground for hope that God will deviate in the case of the Jews from this universal principle.

1. For which cause etc.: an unexpected result of § 4, and another link in the chain of moral cause and effect. **Without excuse:** recalling ch. i. 20. God manifested Himself in Nature to leave man without excuse for ungodliness: and now Paul asserts that, by giving up the heathen to shame and thus revealing His anger against ungodliness, He has left without excuse all who estimate moral conduct. *Judge:* to distinguish right and wrong, to pronounce sentence, but not necessarily an adverse sentence. We cannot avoid setting up ourselves as judges and pronouncing judgment, by our lips or in our hearts, on the actions of others. Consequently, the words **whoever thou art that judgest** include all men. From this universal judging, we shall learn in *v.* 15 that all men have a moral law. In § 4, by referring to idolatry

and to the revelation of God in Nature, Paul limited his remarks to the Gentiles. But now he infers, from God's manifested anger against the Gentiles, that all men are without excuse, thus including the Jews: and, by excluding them in § 4 and including them in § 5, he compels us to think about them. From *vv.* 9, 10 we learn that the distinction of Jew and Gentile was in his mind. In § 4, he gained the verdict of the Jews against the Gentiles; and he now declares that by this verdict both Jews and Gentiles are left without excuse.

For wherein etc.: proof of the foregoing words. And this proof rests upon the words following: **for thou dost practise the same things.** Paul looks every man in the face and charges him with committing the sins described above. This implies that apart from the Gospel all men are sinning. He does not say expressly that all men commit the unnatural sins described in ch. i. 26, 27: for these are followed by a long list of other sins. But he asserts plainly that all men do what they know that God forbids and may justly punish. We have however proof that the special sins just referred to, which were in Paul's day so prevalent among the Gentiles, were also prevalent among those who called themselves the people of God. The best of the Jews would be the least likely to absolve themselves from this charge of universal sinfulness: for their efforts to do right would teach them the deep corruption of their own hearts. The general moral debasement of the nation is depicted in dark colours on the pages of Josephus.

If Paul's accusation be true, it is also true that all who pass sentence on others, by doing so, pass an adverse sentence on themselves. A judge who takes his seat to try a man for forgery, and is himself a forger, by opening the trial condemns himself: for he admits that forgery is a crime, and therefore that he himself deserves punishment. In § 4, Paul compelled the Jews to join in his sentence against the Gentiles. But the conduct which he compelled them to condemn as a mark of God's anger is, he now tells them, their own conduct. Therefore, every man who has the moral sense to concur in this condemnation leaves himself without excuse.

2. The R.V. reads in the text, following the A.V., **and** *we know;* putting in the margin, as read by "Many ancient authorities," **for** *we know:* a variation in one word. This latter reading would make *v.* 2 confirm *v.* 1, whereas the former would make it an additional assertion. The latter reading is given by Tischendorf;

the former by the other editors, (see Introd. iii. 7,) who put the latter in their margin, thus expressing doubt. The external evidence seems to me slightly to favour the reading *and we know;* and the internal evidence somewhat more so. But the practical difference is slight.

To their own self-condemnation, Paul now adds the sentence of a more tremendous judge. **The judgment of God**: in this case evidently a sentence of condemnation. **We know etc.**: an appeal to their own conscience. Men may call in question the grounds of their belief that God will punish sin: but with a voice which they cannot contradict their own hearts tell them that He does so. In Xenophon's *Anabasis* bk. ii. 5. 7, a Greek general reminds a Persian that to break oaths is to incur the anger of the gods, and that from their anger none can escape. Here we have one heathen appealing to another, to a stranger in race and religion, on the ground of a moral truth admitted by all. **According to truth**: corresponding with the reality of the case, with man's actual conduct. All judges aim at this: God attains it. **Upon**: as in ch. i. 18.

We now see the justice of the universal inference in *v.* 1. God made His name known to the Gentiles, in order to take from them all excuse for ungodliness. They treated with contempt His revelation of Himself: and in proof of His anger He gave them up to gross sin. In a more definite manner God made Himself known to the Jews: and their own hearts tell them that they are guilty of the darkest ingratitude and the most shameful sin. Therefore, if the gross sin of the Gentiles is a mark of God's anger against them for disregarding the revelation in Nature, and if God's judgment corresponds with man's real conduct, the gross sin of the Jews is a mark of God's anger against them for neglecting a more glorious revelation. Possibly even § 4 was designed chiefly for the Jews. It is a darker repetition of Nathan's parable. After securing their verdict against the character described, Paul turns round in a moment and says, Thou art the man.

Notice in *v.* 2 a repetition, after complete proof, of the assertion in ch. i. 18.

3. A pointed question bringing out in its worthlessness and absurdity a secret hope of escape cherished by some who are guilty of the sins which they condemn in others. While valid for all men, Paul's appeal refers probably to the Jews. **Dost thou reckon this?** is this the result of thy reasoning? Paul singles out an objector and speaks to him as though he had the man

standing before him. For to him every thought assumes living form and breathes and speaks. **Judgest . . . and dost:** solemn restatement of the man's inconsistency. He condemns himself by condemning others, and knows that his own self-condemnation is confirmed by God who judges every man according to his actual conduct: and yet he expects in some way to evade the sentence of God. The words *according to truth* in *v.* 2 and **the judgment of God** in *v.* 3 expose the folly of this expectation. From man's judgment escape is possible: but who shall escape the sentence of God?

4. Another question, bringing out the secret ground of this fallacious hope. God is merciful; and has shown special **kindness** to Israel by **forbearance and longsuffering** of long-continued sin. Therefore, though the man lives in sin, he expects to escape punishment. Paul declares that this hope is to **despise** *His kindness* in ignorance of its purpose. **The riches of His** *kindness:* His abundant gentleness towards men: cp. ch. ix. 23. Paul frequently heaps word on word, because he feels how poor the best words are to express the great things of God. His *forbearance* is shown in His holding back for a time His anger against sin: in the duration of His forbearance we see His *longsuffering:* and in the forbearance and longsuffering we see His abundant *kindness.*

Repentance: a change of purpose, arising from change of circumstances or from dissatisfaction with a former purpose, and prompting a change of action. This original use of the word is seen in 1 Sam. xv. 11, where God is said to repent, and in *v.* 29, where we read that He cannot repent: cp. Jer. iv. 28, xviii. 7—10. In a technical religious sense, viz. to denote a sinner's purpose to forsake sin and serve God, the word is found, without further specification, in Mt. iii. 2, 8, 11, iv. 17, Lk. xxiv. 47, Acts xvii. 30, xxvi. 20. See also Acts xx. 21. **Leading thee towards** *repentance:* God is bringing to bear on this man influences tending towards a change of purpose and a resolve henceforth to do right. But evidently these divine influences are altogether without result. For in spite of them the man's *heart* is *without repentance: v.* 5. In English we should say, "seeks to lead thee to repentance." But the Greek idiom here used is equally correct and more graphic. For the hand of God is actually upon the man, drawing him towards something better. Paul asserts that God in His kindness exerts influences which, if yielded to, would change his life purpose. *Towards:* an aim or tendency: see under ch. i. 1. God delays punishment because His *kindness*

moves Him to use influence to lead the man to a new purpose in life, viz. to serve God. But the sinner, **not knowing** this, supposes that God's kindness arises from indulgence towards sin. Now a ruler's indulgence towards sin is an evil; whereas God's kindness is infinitely good. This man misunderstands it to be a disposition which he would himself despise in any judge, and shows his contempt of it by refusing to be moved by it. He thus *despises* **the kindness of God.** Yet upon this kindness, which he both misunderstands and resists, he leans for **escape** from *the* just *judgment of God.*

Notice that Paul singles out of the promiscuous mass of his opponents a man who is heaping up for himself future punishment, and tells him without hesitation that God is leading him towards repentance; and charges him with ignorance for not knowing this. From this we infer with certainty that upon all men God is bringing these influences to bear. For, if there were one exception, Paul could not use the language of this verse. Cp. 1 Tim. ii. 4, Jno. xii. 32. Without these influences, repentance is impossible: Jno. vi. 44, 65.

5. A plain statement of what the man is actually doing, the man who while continuing in sin cherishes a secret hope of escape. **Hardness**: moral obstinacy which will not bend to divine influences: chs. ix. 18, xi. 7, Mt. xix. 8, Acts xix. 9, Heb. iii. 8. **A heart without-repentance**: result and proof of his hardness. **According to** his character and *heart*, he acts. **Treasuring**: adding day by day to his sins, and therefore to the *anger* of God, hidden now as in a treasure-house, but in safe keeping, till the **day of anger and of revelation** (or *unveiling*, see ch. i. 18) **of God's righteous judgment.** Notice here a definite *day of judgment*, as in *v.* 16, Acts xvii. 31; this last an important coincidence. The increasing treasure of wrath, hidden now, will then be visible to all. Contrast Mt. vi. 19. This implies gradation in punishment: otherwise there could be no increase of it.

6. An assertion supporting the foregoing. It commends itself to the moral sense of all men. And, as a word-for-word quotation of Ps. lxii. 12 (LXX.) and as giving the sense of innumerable statements in the O.T., it would appeal to the Jew with divine authority. The Psalmist's enemies, while secretly plotting against him, professed to be his friends. He appeals to God, who, he declares, will recompense each according to his works. The passage refers evidently to Jewish enemies, and therefore implies that God will treat even Jews according to their deeds. The quotation

does not expressly refer to the day of judgment. But the incompleteness of retribution on earth, taken in connection with the unfailing truth of these words, implies a recompense beyond the grave. These quoted words, if their truth be admitted, prove that the judgment of the great day will be just, that therefore all who live in sin are day by day increasing the punishment which in that day will fall upon them, and that the delay of punishment arises, not from God's indifference to sin, but from His desire that men may turn and live.

7—10. Development of the great principle just asserted in O.T. language, in reference to its two sides of reward and punishment. In *v.* 7 we have reward; in *vv.* 8, 9, punishment; and in *v.* 10 reward again.

7. Glory: see under ch. i. 23. It denotes here, as in ch. v. 2, viii. 18, 21, the splendour with which God will cover His servants, and which will evoke the admiration of all. **Honour:** a mark of the value we put upon an object: rendered *price* in 1 Cor. vi. 20, vii. 23. Same word in Rom. xii. 10, xiii. 7, 1 Cor. xii. 23, 24, 1 Tim. v. 17, vi. 1. It denotes here a recognition by God of the faithfulness of His servants. **Incorruptibility:** absence of injury or decay of any kind. Same word in 1 Cor. xv. 42, 50, 53, 54, 2 Tim. i. 10; Wisdom ii. 23, vi. 19, 20: a cognate word in Rom. i. 23, 1 Cor. ix. 25, xv. 52, 1 Tim. i. 17, 1 Pet. i. 4, 23. Those who do right, God will cover (see *v.* 10) with a splendour which will make them objects of universal admiration, will attest the value He puts upon them, and will abide undimmed for ever. For this reward, they now **seek:** it is the deliberate aim of their life, and the hope of it (see ch. v. 2) is to them a joy. **Perseverance,** or *endurance*, literally *continuance under:* a brave holding up under burdens which would cast us down, a pressing forward in face of foes who would drive us back. Same word in chs. v. 3, 4, viii. 25, xii. 12, xv. 4, 5. It is one of the great words descriptive of the Christian life, representing it as a toil and conflict. **According to . . . good work:** along a path of doing good, under difficulties and in face of enemies, they *seek glory and honour.*

Eternal life: reward awaiting the class of persons here referred to. So chs. v. 21, vi. 22, 23, Gal. vi. 8, 1 Tim. i. 16, vi. 12, Tit. i. 2, iii. 7; also Acts xiii. 46, 48 in a speech of Paul; Jude 21; Mt. xix. 16, 29, xxv. 46, Mk. x. 17, 30, Lk. x. 25, xviii. 18, 30; and with conspicuous frequency Jno. iii. 15, 16, 36, iv. 14, 36, v. 24, 39, vi. 27, 40, 47, 54, 68, x. 28, xii. 25, 50, xvii. 2, 3, 1 Jno. i. 2, ii. 25,

iii. 15, v. 11, 13, 20. This use of the phrase by various N.T. writers leaves no room to doubt that it, or its Aramaic equivalent, was actually used by Christ. Same words in Dan. xii. 2, LXX.; also Enoch chs. xxxvii. 4, xl. 9, lviii. 3: important parallels. These passages prove that Christ adopted an eschatological phrase prevalent among the Jews. His new and distinctive teaching was that eternal life will be the reward of all who put faith in Him.

Life beyond the grave is in the N.T. always a reward of well-doing, never the common lot of all men. This implies that it is a state of blessing: and this is confirmed, here and elsewhere, by the other terms used to describe this future life. The future state of the wicked is not *life*, but "death" and "destruction:" so *v.* 12, vi. 21, Gal. vi. 8, Ph. iii. 19. *Eternal* or *agelasting:* duration continuing throughout some *lifetime* or *age* which the writer has in view. That the age in view here is absolutely endless, is implied by the word *incorruptibility* here and in 1 Cor. ix. 25, xv. 42—54, 2 Tim. i. 10, 1 Pet. i. 4, by the purpose expressed in "may not perish" in Jno. iii. 16, etc.; and is made absolutely certain by the endless life and infinite love of our Father in heaven. See under ch. xvi. 25.

8, 9. Another class of conduct and retribution. **Those of a mercenary spirit:** men actuated by low and selfish motives; a character always more or less assumed by sin, and in all forms and degrees essentially opposed to the Christian life. **Disobedient to the truth:** equivalent to "hold down the truth with unrighteousness" in ch. i. 18. In Nature and in the Law of Moses, God manifested unseen realities. These were designed to rule the life and thought of men. But some men refuse to submit to this divine rule. Yet, as creatures, they are compelled to obey a power stronger than themselves; their only choice being a choice of masters. Refusing to obey the truth, i.e. to live in harmony with reality, they actually **obey unrighteousness:** this last word is used here as in ch. i. 18, which this verse recalls. Cp. ch. vi. 16.

Now follows the retribution awaiting the persons just described. **Anger:** as in ch. i. 18, God's determination to punish. **Fury:** a passionate outbursting of *anger*. Both are forbidden in Eph. iv. 31, Col. iii. 8: but anger is permitted in Eph. iv. 26. Human passions are here attributed to God, because only thus can God's indignation against sin and the tremendous punishment awaiting sinners be set forth. Same word in Rev. xiv. 10, 19, xv. 1, 7, xvi. 1, and both words together in chs. xvi. 19, xix. 15. But not elsewhere in N.T. is *fury* attributed to God. **Affliction:** any kind of hardship,

e.g. poverty, sickness, persecution, or punishment. **Helplessness:** literally, narrowness of space, affording no way of escape; translated twice *straitened* (A.V. and R.V.) in 2 Cor. vi. 12. Rom. viii. 35 suggests, and 2 Cor. iv. 8 proves, that it is stronger than *affliction*. The four words are a chain of cause and effect. God is angry, determined to punish sin. His *anger* bursts forth in divine *fury:* this falls upon man in the form of *affliction;* and puts him, with no way of escape, in a position of absolute *helplessness*. These last words imply conscious suffering: so Mt. xiii. 42, 50.

Upon every soul etc.: further description of those upon whom will fall this awful punishment. It will strike the *soul*, the seat of life; and will fall *upon* (as in *v.* 2, ch. i. 18) *every soul* **of man that works out evil.** These last words are a short summary of the conduct described in *v.* 8. **Jew first and Greek:** as in ch. i. 16. In the day of judgment, distinctions are recognised; but they avail not. We may conceive the Jew standing nearer to, and the Greek farther from, the throne; as in Paul's day they stood (see Eph. ii. 13, 17) nearer to and farther from the sound of the Gospel. To the *Jew*, the Gospel came *first*, and on him the retribution will first fall: but the *Greek* will not escape.

10. Restatement of the reward awaiting the righteous, in contrast to the fate of the lost, just described; and therefore parallel to *v.* 7. The **glory and honour** for which they seek will be given to them; **and peace,** as in ch. i. 7. It is an exact opposite of *affliction and helplessness*, the one resulting from the favour, the other from the anger, of God. The repetition of *Jew first and Greek* shows how prominent in Paul's thought was this distinction. To assert, while recognising it, the impartial judgment of God, is the chief purpose of this chapter.

11. A great principle underlying the O.T. declaration in *v.* 6, asserted here in order to confirm the statement in *vv.* 9, 10 that God will punish and reward both Jew and Greek.

Respect-of-persons: literally, *face-reception:* to look at a man's face and exterior, instead of at his heart and life; to take into consideration his gold ring or fine clothing, and treat him accordingly. Same word in Eph. vi. 9, Col. iii. 25, Jas. ii. 1: cp. Jas. ii. 9, Acts x. 34, also Lk. xx. 21, Gal. ii. 6. The statement that God does not look at mere externals commends itself to the moral sense of every man. It is clearly implied in the O.T. declaration of *v.* 6; and it implies that the sentence of the great day will not be determined by the accident of birth. Yet some such accident is the only ground of trust of the man addressed in

v. 3. The remainder of ch. ii. is an exposition of this great principle in its bearing on the distinction of Jew and Gentile.

REVIEW. In *vv.* 1, 2, Paul reasserts, as valid for all men, the assertion in ch. i. 18. That it admits of no exception whatever, he proves in *vv.* 3—11 by words taken from the O.T., and by expounding the principles which underlie them. He also correctly infers from these words that all who continue in sin are daily increasing the punishment which awaits them; and that, if they expect to escape because of God's kindness, they thereby show their ignorance of the purpose of that kindness and their contempt for it.

In § 5, Paul has taught us that, apart from the Gospel, all men not only have committed but are committing sin; that God is bringing to bear on all men influences tending towards repentance; and that the judgment of the great day will be, both in its broad distinction of reward and punishment, and in the measure of punishment, according to works. This implies that the glad tidings of salvation announced in ch. i. 16 are not inconsistent with, and do not set aside, a final retribution according to works.

SECTION VI

THE GIVING OF THE LAW IS NO PROOF THAT GOD WILL HAVE RESPECT OF PERSONS

CH. II. 12—24

For so many as have sinned without law will also perish without law: and so many as have sinned in law will be judged by means of law. [13] *For not the hearers of law are righteous before God; but the doers of law will be justified* (14 *for whenever Gentiles, the* men *who have no law, do by nature the things of the Law, these not having law are to themselves a law;* 15 men *who show the work of the Law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing joint-witness* thereto, *and their reasonings one with another when accusing or even excusing)* 16 *in* the *day when*

God will judge the hidden things of men, according to my Gospel, through Christ Jesus.

17 *Moreover, if thou bearest the name of Jew, and dost rest upon law, and dost exult in God,* 18 *and knowest the will* of God, *and approvest the things that excel, being instructed out of the Law;* 19 *and art persuaded that thyself art a guide of blind men, a light of those in darkness,* 20 *an instructor of foolish ones, a teacher of babes, having the form of knowledge and the truth in the Law—*21 *the* man *then that teachest another, dost thou not teach thyself? The* man *who as herald forbiddest to steal, dost thou steal?* 22 *The* man *that biddest not to commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery? The* man *that abhorrest the idols, dost thou rob temples?* 23 *Thou who dost exult in law, through transgression of the Law thou dishonourest God.* 24 *"For the name of God, because of you, is blasphemed among the Gentiles," according as it is written.*

This section introduces a new element, THE LAW; and confirms the great principle asserted in *v.* 11 by proving that the gift of the Law to Isreal only was no deviation from it. Paul asserts in *v.* 12 that the presence or absence of the Law will save no one: he proves this in *v.* 13 by appealing to a principle which underlies all law; by showing in *vv.* 14, 15 that this principle applies even to the Gentiles; and by showing in *vv.* 17—24 that to deny its application to the Jews involves the greatest absurdity. In this way the hope struck down in § 5 is traced to its source, viz. God's special kindness to Israel shown in the gift of the Law; and there mercilessly dispelled.

12. Proof of *v.* 11, even in view of the distinction of Jew and Gentile. **Law**: a prescription of conduct by an authority claiming to determine what men are to do or not to do: see note under ch. iii. 20. **Without-law**: cognate word twice in 1 Cor. ix. 21: Gentiles, who in *v.* 14 are twice said to "have no law." They **sinned**; but their sin had nothing to do with the historical and external *law* given to Israel at Sinai. Yet they **will perish** or *be destroyed:* see note below: but their ruin will be *without law*, i.e. on principles independent of the Law of Moses, of which they never heard. **Sinned in law**: cp. ch. iii. 19: their sins were committed in a moral environment created by the Law given at Sinai. And this moral environment will be the standard or instrument **by**

means of which they **will be judged.** The similar form of the two clauses portrays the similar treatment and fate of two classes of sinners. It thus confirms *v.* 11.

13. A great principle underlying all law and frequently asserted in the Law of Moses. It supports the foregoing words. **Hearers:** in an age when books were scarce and when the Law was known chiefly through public reading of it. Cp. Jas. i. 22, Acts xv. 21. **Righteous before God:** enjoying His approval as judge: see under ch. i. 17. **Will be justified:** will receive a favourable sentence from the judge: see note under § 9. That the future tense refers to the day of judgment, we shall learn in *v.* 16: so Mt. xii. 37, an important parallel and a meeting-point of two very different types of N.T. teaching. Not those who have listened to a law, but those who have done what it bids, will be accepted by the judge. This is the very essence of all law: for law is a declaration of what men are to do. And it was proclaimed often in the Law of Moses and by the prophets. Cp. ch. x. 5, Gal. iii. 10. Moreover, if this principle be admitted, if the rewards of law are given only to those who have obeyed it, and if its punishments are inflicted on those who have broken it, then, evidently, they who have sinned will be judged by means of the law in which they have sinned. Thus the Law itself proclaims the condemnation of those who continue in sin, and the folly of those who while living in sin hope to escape because of the special favour shown to Israel in the gift of the Law. Consequently, the gift of the Law to Israel is no presumption whatever that in their case God will deviate from His principle of judging all men without respect of persons.

14, 15. These verses confirm the universal principle asserted in *v.* 13 by showing that it applies not only to Jews but to Gentiles. All **Gentiles** belong to the definite category of the men **who have no law.** They have no external prescription of conduct like the Law of Sinai. **By-nature:** by the outworking of forces born in us, as distinguished from results of education and later events, i.e. of influences which since our birth have moulded our conduct and character: same word in Eph. ii. 3, Gal. ii. 15, iv. 8. *By nature* the bee builds cells and lays up honey: and this proves that in the bee certain principles of architecture have been implanted by a higher power. **The things of the Law:** actions bidden in the Law of Moses; so *v.* 15, *the work of the Law.* For instance, the Law says, "Honour thy father and thy mother." The Greeks, who never heard the Law, sometimes did this: so Xenophon, *Memoirs* bk. iv. 4. 20, quoted in my *Through Christ to God* p. 28.

Their conduct, **whenever they do** *the things of the Law*, which cannot be a result of a law they never heard, must therefore spring from moral forces born in them. This obedience is only fragmentary, and therefore cannot justify: for the Law demands perfect obedience. So Gal. iii. 10. But it is sufficient for Paul's argument. **Not having law:** emphatic repetition of the point of the argument. The Gentiles have no law external to themselves; yet they sometimes do the things bidden in the Law: they **are** therefore **a law to themselves,** i.e. there is within them, as part of themselves, something which is to them what the Books of Moses are to the Jews. This proof appears *whenever Gentiles do the things of the Law.*

15. Further exposition and confirmation of the argument in *v.* 14. **The work of the Law:** the conduct prescribed in the Law of Moses, looked upon as a code of morals. **Hearts:** as in ch. i. 21. Their occasional obedience proves that the God of Nature, who wrote His Law on the tables of stone given to Israel at Sinai, has engraved it on the walls of that inner chamber from which comes all human action. Many disobey this law written within. But, as Socrates argues in Xenophon's *Memoirs* referred to above, this does not disprove the authority of the law. Thus the Gentiles carry within them, **written in their** *hearts*, a standard of conduct which God has given to be the rule of their life.

Bearing-joint-witness: confirming what another witness has said: same word in chs. viii. 16, ix. 1. **Conscience,** or *consciousness:* same word in ch. ix. 1, xiii. 5, 2 Cor. i. 12: the inborn faculty by which a man contemplates, and pronounces sentence upon, himself, his thoughts, emotions, purposes, words, and actions. It is the inward eye which reads the law written in the heart and compares with it the conduct of himself and others. Practically it is the law written within looked upon as a faculty of judgment: it is the inborn Moral Sense of man. This inward knowledge and inborn faculty of judgment, whose voice no one can contradict, confirms the evidence given by the occasional right action of the Gentiles, and proves that God has given to them a standard of right and wrong by which they will be judged.

And their reasonings etc.: a second confirmation of the same. Every day the heathen *reasons* in his mind whether something done by his neighbour is right or wrong. The result is that he *accuses* his neighbour, or *excuses* him from the accusations of others. These *reasonings* imply a standard with which the conduct of men around is compared. And in all nations, as is proved by

the literature of the ancient world, this standard is in its main outlines the same: and in the main it corresponds with the moral teaching of the Law of Moses. Thus *the reasonings* which find utterance in the blame or praise with which even the heathen speak one of another bear witness that God has given to them a law which is a part of themselves, and is to them what the book was to Israel. **Accusing**: put first because in a world of sinners man's verdict on his fellows is more frequently condemnatory than approving. But even their **excusing** of others implies a moral standard written within. Of this we have now three proofs, the occasional right conduct of the heathen, their inward estimate of their own actions, and their spoken estimate of the actions of men around them

It is easy to feel the force of the above reasoning. The ancient writers of Greece and Rome prove clearly that the Gentiles among whom Paul moved sometimes did noble actions in harmony with the moral teaching of the Pentateuch; and that, speaking generally, the heart of the people, expressed in its approval and condemnation of men around, was in harmony with the same. This proves that, although they had no outward law, the Gentiles had an inner law which was a part of themselves, which guided their judgment, and was designed to guide their conduct. The force of this argument is not lessened by the fact that on some points this law was imperfect. The letters written within were partly defaced. But enough remained to prove their divine origin, and to be a standard by which the heathen will be judged.

This argument would not fall to the ground even if the Gentiles had been unconscious of the divine origin of this unwritten, yet deeply-written, law. For all admitted its existence, whether or not they knew whence it came. That it came from God, we infer from its agreement with the Law of Sinai: and that it came from God many anceint writers acknowledge. SOCRATES, in Xenophon's *Memoirs* bk. iv. 4. 19—21, referred to above, speaks of the unwritten laws held in every country, and quotes as samples honour to parents and the prohibition of incest. He says that since these laws are universally held and are evidently not a result of human legislation they must have been made by the gods. Still more explicit is CICERO in his *Laws* bk. ii. 4: "This then, as it appears to me, has been the decision of the wisest philosophers, that law was neither a thing contrived by the genius of man nor established by any decree of the people, but a certain eternal principle which governs the entire universe, wisely commanding what is right and

forbidding what is wrong. Therefore they called that primal and supreme law the mind of God enjoining or forbidding each separate thing in accordance with reason. On which account it is that this law, which the gods have bestowed on the human race, is so justly praised. For it is the reason and mind of a wise Being equally able to urge us to good and to deter us from evil. . . . For even he (Tarquin) had the light of reason deduced from the nature of things, which incites to good actions and dissuades from evil ones; and which does not begin for the first time to be a law when it is drawn up in writing, but from the first moment that it exists: and its existence is coeval with the divine mind. Therefore the true and supreme law, whose commands and prohibitions are equally authoritative, is the right reason of the Sovereign Jupiter."

The above testimonies receive important confirmation from the supreme authority, recognised by many who reject the authority of the Bible, of the inborn moral sense. This last is by no means infallible; but until better instructed it is the law we are bound to obey. A man may make mistake in obeying Conscience: he never does right to disobey it. The peremptory authority of the moral sense, dominating all other considerations, reveals its divine source.

From this law written within, all external law receives its authority; and by it must all external law be judged. To it appeals not only the moral law given to Israel but the supreme revelation given in Christ. And the homage paid by the moral sense of man to the character and teaching of Christ is the strongest testimony to His divine mission. It is a voice of God in man bearing witness to the Voice of God speaking to us from the lips of the Incarnate Son.

This inborn voice of God is doubtless the chief agent through which "God is leading" men "towards repentance."

The voice of conscience is a clear monition of a universal and impartial judgment to come. For its absolute authority assures us that it is able to vindicate its commands by adequate retribution. Such retribution we do not see in the present life; and are therefore compelled to expect it beyond the grave.

Paul has now confirmed the universal principle stated in *v.* 13 by showing how it will apply to Gentiles as well as Jews: and, by pointing to a law which all have broken, he has confirmed the statement in *v.* 12. The difference created by the partial gift of the Mosaic Law is not so great as at first sight appears. To all men, in different ways, God has given the one law. That He gave it to the Jews in more emphatic form, does not afford the slightest

presumption that He will deviate in their favour from the great principle which underlies all law.

16. Not connected with *v.* 15 : for the accusations and excuses were those made in Paul's own day. We must therefore take *vv.* 14, 15 as a parenthesis. Paul declared in *v.* 13 that only "the doers of law will be justified." But, instead of saying at what bar and when, he stops to prove that even the Gentiles have a law, and therefore come under the application of this great principle ; and then in *v.* 16 takes up the thought thus broken off. **In the day when God will judge:** recalling *v.* 5, "in the day of anger and revelation of God's righteous judgment." **The hidden things of men:** cp. 1 Cor. iv. 5, "till the Lord come, who also will bring to light *the hidden things* of darkness and make manifest the counsels of the hearts." God will publicly pass sentence on the secrets which the man himself, in the solitude of his own conscience, has already condemned. **My Gospel:** so ch. xvi. 25 : the good news of salvation as Paul understands and proclaims it. He reminds his readers that the Gospel he everywhere preaches implies that God will judge the secrets of men at the great day. The doctrine of retribution beyond the grave must ever accompany, as a safeguard, the announcement of present salvation. **Through Christ Jesus:** see note under ch. i. 5, and compare Jno. v. 27, 1 Cor. iv. 5.

17—24. Another confirmation of *v.* 13, in addition to that given in *vv.* 14, 15. After supporting the principle that the doers, not the hearers, of law will be justified, by showing how it applies to the Gentiles, Paul now further supports the same by a personal and pointed appeal which brings out the absurdity of the position of the man who practically rejects it.

17, 18. Jew: a **name** of which he is proud : cp. Gal. ii. 15, Rev. iii. 9. **Rest upon law:** he feels secure because he possesses a standard of right and wrong, an authoritative declaration that those who obey will be rewarded and those who disobey punished. Paul evidently speaks now to the man addressed in *vv.* 3, 4. But there the word *Jew* was kept back because others might cherish the fallacious hope there expressed ; and because this hope, in Jew or Greek, was dispelled by the one universal principle that God has no respect of persons. In *vv.* 17—24, Paul's reasoning applies to Jews only. **Exult:** so chs. iii. 27, v. 2, 11 ; xi. 18 : a rising or gladness of spirit which has always in view the object external or internal which has called it forth, and which is always ready to express itself in words. We *exult* **in God,** when our hearts rise within us at the thought of His greatness, His power,

His love to us. This man, while living in sin and therefore under condemnation of God, is lifted up by the thought that Jehovah is God of the Jews. **And knowest the will** of God : another ground of confidence. It enables him to distinguish and **approve the things that excel** : for he is day by day **instructed out of the Law.** This vain confidence in a mere knowledge of the Law finds utterance in Jno. vii. 49.

Notice the gradation in *vv.* 17, 18. The man addressed remembers that he is a Jew, and that to his nation the tables of stone were given. This gives him, even while living in sin, an assurance of safety. From the Law, his thoughts rise to its great Author. That the Maker of the world is the God of the Jews, fills him with exultation. Through the Law he has looked into the mind, and knows the will, of God : amid the mistaken judgments of others, he has an infallible standard by which he can determine and approve that which is really good.

19, 20. A second flight of steps in the self-exaltation of the Jew. Having attained the position described in *v.* 18, he confidently aspires to something higher. While he can see all things clearly in the light of the Law, others are in darkness : and he is fully **persuaded** that he is a **guide** of those who wish to walk in the path of morality but have not eyes to see the way. He can give to **blind men** not only guidance but sight : for he is a **light of those in darkness.** He will undertake the whole moral training of those who have not the wisdom which he has learnt from the Law : for he is an **instructor of foolish ones.** They are **babes** ; and he offers to be their **teacher** : for **in the Law,** which he *has*, **knowledge and the truth** present themselves in definite **form** to the mind of man. *Instructor :* one who undertakes whatever belongs to moral training, thus differing from a mere *teacher*. *Form :* the sum-total of that by which the inward nature of an object presents itself to our senses, and thus makes itself known to us, that by which we distinguish one object from another. Whatever we can see, feel, or hear is the form of a material object : whatever we can conceive is the form of a mental object. Same word in 2 Tim. iii. 5 : cognate word in Ph. ii. 6, 7, Mk. xvi. 12. The revealed will of God is *knowledge* when grasped by the mind of man ; and *the knowledge*, as that best worth knowing. It is *truth*, because it corresponds with reality : it is *the truth*, because it sets forth the one great reality. *The knowledge and the truth* represent the contents of *the Law* in their relation to the mind of man and to objective reality. This man

claims to be a teacher, because by his acquaintance with the sacred books his mind grasps the most worthy object-matter of intellectual effort, and a correct delineation of the eternal realities. The same eternal reality, and the same true matter of human knowledge, has in a still higher degree assumed form, and presented itself to the mind, in the Gospel of Christ.

Observe the beauty and symmetry of *vv.* 17—20. They fall into two divisions, each ending with a participial clause explaining the clauses before it. In the former, we have a learner; in the latter, a would-be teacher. The second division takes a loftier flight; and is therefore introduced by a word expressing confidence.

21—24. A personal appeal, exposing the ridiculous position of the man addressed.

21, 22. The man **that teachest another:** a short summary of the sentence begun in *v.* 17; completed now by the question **dost thou not teach thyself?** "If thou hast this knowledge and art a teacher of others, is it true that thou leavest thyself untaught?" **Preachest:** proclaimest as a *herald*, a state officer of importance and honour. He made announcements in the name of the Government, in peace or war, to enemies, allies, or subjects: so Dan. iii. 4. The Jews looked upon themselves as heralds of God. The man before us does that which, as herald, he forbids others to do. He acts as Nebuchadnezzar's herald would have done had he refused himself to bow to the image of gold.

Abhorrest the idols. In order to separate Israel as completely as possible from idolatry, God commanded them (e.g. Dt. vii. 25f) to look upon everything belonging in any way to idols as utterly hateful and disgusting. They were not to bring into their houses anything pertaining to false gods; else the curse of the idol would rest upon them. This divine detestation of idols, the man before us shares. Yet he **robs-temples:** a recognised crime (Acts xix. 37) in the days of Paul, and looked upon as specially atrocious. It was prompted by the treasures often deposited in temples. Josephus says that Moses specially forbad to *rob temples: Antiq.* bk. iv. 8. 10. Here is a man to whom an idol is an object of abhorrence, to whom the touch of everything belonging to it is pollution. Yet he violently breaks into the very sanctuary of a false god and with his own hands brings into his own house the gold and silver which, because consecrated to an idol, God has pronounced accursed. Paul cannot possibly refer to the plunder, direct or indirect, of the

temple at Jerusalem. For this was not inconsistent with abhorrence of idols: whereas the previous questions, of which this is the climax, show that Paul has in his mind a case of gross inconsistency.

The prohibition of the three sins here mentioned is a pattern of the teaching which this man, like many Jews of that day, thrusts upon others but refuses himself to practise. All these sins belong to *the secret things of men*, in *v.* 16: for the man who commits them may still have an outward appearance of morality. Notice a gradation of guilt. This man takes the property of another, invades the sanctity of his home, and hides in his own house things specially accursed by God.

23. Solemn assertion, following indignant questions, as *v.* 5 follows *vv.* 3, 4. Paul tells the man the practical result of the conduct just described. **Exult in law**: combining "rest in law and exult in God" in *v.* 17. He exults in the thought that to his nation God has given an authoritative standard of right and wrong; yet he tramples that standard under foot, and by so doing leads us to think slightly of the God who gave it. **Transgression**: as in chs. iv. 15, v. 14.

24. Proof of the foregoing. *Blaspheme:* to speak so as to injure, whether against God, as here, or against men, as in chs. iii. 8, xiv. 16, Mt. xxvii. 39: an English form of the Greek word here used. Even the heathen saw the absurd contradiction of this man's words and works. Yet from his bold profession they suppose him to enjoy the favour of the God of the Jews: and they spoke with contempt of a deity who, as they thought, smiled on such a worshipper. **Because of** his profession and conduct, **the name of God** was **blasphemed among the Gentiles. According as it is written**: same words in ch. i. 17, followed by a quotation. Here they follow a quotation nearly word for word from Isa. lii. 5, LXX. In each case they call attention, as in Rom. iii. 4, 10, iv. 17 etc., to a harmony of Paul's teaching with the Old Testament. The words *because of you* and *among the Gentiles* are not in the Hebrew, and were doubtless not in the original prophecy: but they are clearly implied there. Through the captivity (Isa. lii. 2) of His people, the name of God was constantly reviled. His power seemed to have been broken. Men said that the gods of Babylon had triumphed over Him who divided the Red Sea. These words were evidently spoken *among the Gentiles* and *because of* what had happened to the Jews. Hence the added words correctly reproduce the prophet's meaning:

and Paul does not hesitate to quote the current translation, though in an unimportant detail it was not verbally correct. The prophet's words teach the great principle that the character and honour of God are at stake in His people. Men judge Him by what they see in them. If we admit this principle—as we are compelled to do both by the prophet's words and by daily observation—we cannot be surprised that the Gentiles speak with contempt of Him whose worshippers teach others morality and themselves live in sin.

Here as in ch. i. 17 Paul appeals to the Scriptures not so much for a proof as to point out a harmony; a harmony greater than at first sight appears. In each case, God surrendered to their enemies (cp. ch. i. 24) those who, while professing to be His servants, actually turned away from Him: and, in each case, the degradation brought dishonour to Him whose name the degraded ones bore.

Review of **17—24.** In the light of the day which will reveal all secrets, Paul turns suddenly round upon a man who calls himself a Jew. In that name he glories. He rests secure because he belongs to the nation to whom the Law was given. He remembers that his fathers were chosen by God to be His own peculiar people; and the thought fills him with exultation. By study of the Law he knows the will of God, and is thus able to form a correct judgment on moral conduct and to approve the right. His possession of the Law and his knowledge of its contents give him confidence. Others are blind: he will be their guide. Himself full of light, he will fill them with light, and will lead in the right path men who have no wisdom to find it for themselves, and teach those who compared with himself are babes. All this he can do because he has the Law, in which the eternal realities, the highest object of human knowledge, are presented in intelligible form. But Paul asks with astonishment, Is it true that you who teach others are yourself untaught? He explains the meaning of this question. You proclaim as herald of the king the law against theft: do you break as well as proclaim that law? You speak against adultery: is it true that in secret you are guilty of it? You profess abhorrence of idols: to you the touch of them and of all that belongs to them is defilement. Is it true that you, regardless alike of the true God and the false gods, enter the inmost chamber of idolatry and steal from the temple and hide in your own house the treasures sacred to the heathen and accursed by God? The man is silent: the absurdity

of his position is evident to all. With solemn earnestness Paul paints a still darker picture, the direct result of this gross inconsistency. By trampling under foot the Law given to guide your own conduct, you bring contempt on Him who gave it. By choosing your nation to be His people, God made you the guardians of His name and honour. That glorious and fearful Name, which to know and to honour is life eternal, you have moved the heathen to mention with derision. They have seen and ridiculed the contrast of the words and works of their own teachers: see Lucian, *Works* lxix. 10. They see the same contrast in you. From your bold profession they suppose that you possess the favour of the God of Israel: and they treat with contempt a deity who, as they think, smiles on you. By your deep depravity, as your fathers by their far-off bondage, you have led the Gentiles to blaspheme.

Notice the double absurdity of the man's position. His own conduct proves the worthlessness to himself of the teaching in which he boasts. If it is good for anything, it is to make men honest and chaste and separate from idols. This man trusts for salvation to that which his own conduct proves to be, so far as he is concerned, worthless. Again, his possession of the Law brings actual dishonour to God: and this is its only practical result. Men around think less of God because this man lives among them, and calls himself a disciple of God. It were more for His glory, and therefore for the good of those who know this man, if he were a professed heathen. Now we know that God is specially jealous for His own honour. Yet this man expects to escape the impartial judgment of God because of his possession of the Law, of which the only result is dishonour to God. That he knows the Law, is his greatest condemnation.

The above argument strikes with equal force against all conduct, of Jews or Christians, which is inconsistent with profession, and which thus brings dishonour to God.

The great principle that God's judgment will be without respect of persons, stated at the end of § 5 as the foundation of its argument, has now been defended from an objection based on the fact that God has Himself made a distinction between man and man by giving the Mosaic Law to Israel only: and has been confirmed by proof that it applies equally to the two great divisions into which the giving of the Law has divided mankind. We found in *v.* 12 a sort of summary of the section: and in *v.* 13 a great principle underlying the very idea of law, a reassertion of the

principle asserted in *v.* 11. In *vv.* 14, 15 we saw that the principle of *v.* 13 can be applied to Gentiles. And in the light of the great day (*v.* 16) we saw in *vv.* 17—24 how absurd it is to deny its application to the Jews: for everyone who does so takes up the ridiculous position there described. Thus the hope which found expression in *vv.* 3, 4 has been traced to, and dried up at, its chief source.

DESTRUCTION. The words *perish*, *destroyed*, *lost*, represent, and collectively reproduce the sense of, one Greek word denoting utter *ruin*, i.e. the end of the normal and beneficial state of that which is *lost*, the utter failure of the maker's or owner's purpose regarding it. In this sense of *ruin* material or moral, the word is very frequent in the Greek drama. It is contrasted in 1 Cor. i. 18 with "saved," and in Lk. xv. 4, 6, 8, 9, 32 with "found." But it does not imply or suggest that the ruined object has ceased, or will ever cease, to exist; although it by no means excludes this idea. Certainly the lost coin in Lk. xv. 8, 9 still existed uninjured: for it was afterwards found. But, by separation from its owner, it became to her practically non-existent; her purposes about it were utterly frustrated. The broken wine-skins in Mt. ix. 17 *perished* when they were so damaged as to be useless. But, though torn, they still existed.

A very common use of the word is to denote natural death, looked upon as utter ruin of human life on earth. But this by no means implies their annihilation: for most of the Greeks looked upon the dead as still conscious; and Christ says in Lk. xi. 51 that "Zachariah *perished* between the altar and the house," just as we speak of good men as *lost* at sea.

With these associations of thought, the word is used in Rom. ii. 12, ix. 22, xiv. 15 and throughout the N.T. to describe the future punishment of sin. As so used, it denotes loss of the "eternal life" promised (e.g. chs. ii. 7, vi. 23) to the righteous, the normal and blessed state of the children of God and the realisation of their original destiny, a life beginning in embryo now and to be fully developed at the great day. The loss of this glorious life is the utter ruin of the lost ones, the complete failure of the purpose of their being, and the loss of whatever gives worth to existence. All this, and no more, the word implies. It does not imply or suggest whether the ruined object continues to exist as a ruin, or has ceased to exist. Nor does the word itself exclude the possibility that the lost may be afterwards found.

In Rom. ii. 12, the word *will-perish* asserts that the punishment described in *vv.* 8, 9 involves utter ruin; as does the word "death" in ch. vi. 16, 21, 23, and "the second death" in Rev. ii. 11, xx. 4. But these terms do not define exactly the ultimate fate of the lost.

The meaning of the word *destruction* and its bearing on the Eternal Punishment of Sin are discussed fully in my volume on *The Last Things*.

SECTION VII

CIRCUMCISION WILL NOT SAVE FROM GOD'S IMPARTIAL JUDGMENT

CH. II. 25—29

For circumcision profits, if thou practise law; but if thou be a transgressor of law, thy circumcision is become uncircumcision. [26] *If then the uncircumcision keeb the decrees of the Law, shall not his uncircumcision be reckoned for circumcision?* [27] *And the uncircumcision from nature, accomplishing the Law, shall judge thee who with letter and circumcision art a transgressor of law.* [28] *For not he* that is so *in that which is manifest is a Jew; nor* is *that* which is *manifest, in flesh, circumcision.* [29] *But he* that is so *in secret* is a *Jew; and circumcision of* the *heart* is *in Spirit, not letter, whose praise* is *not from men, but from Goa.*

Circumcision, which meets us for the first time at the beginning of § 7, is as conspicuous a feature of it as was the Law in § 6. The mention of *circumcision* uncovers another secret ground on which the objector of *vv.* 3, 4 builds a hope of exceptional kindness on the day of judgment. In § 6 he hoped to escape then because God had specially favoured his nation by the gift to them only of the Mosaic Law. But the Law, to which the impenitent man ran for refuge, gave him up to the impartial justice of a dishonoured God. Only one ground of hope remains. He bears in his body the sign and seal of the Covenant of God: by the express command of God

he was circumcised. But, just as in § 6 Paul showed that the Law, so now he will show that Circumcision, will not save an impenitent sinner from God's impartial judgment.

25. This verse confirms the condemnation implied in *vv.* 23, 24, by proving that circumcision will not save a man from it; and thus still further supports the truth of God's impartial judgment, the great matter of this chapter. **Circumcision profits**: it is better to be a circumcised Jew than an uncircumcised heathen. But the abiding advantage is only for those Jews who **practise** what the **Law** bids. What the advantage is, Paul will, in ch. iii. 1, inquire. The inquiry is needless here, because, whatever the benefits be, this man is shut out from them by the condition on which only they can be obtained. Circumcision was the sign of a covenant in which blessing was conditioned by obedience to the Law. Therefore, as a visible pledge that God will bestow the promised blessings, it was a benefit; but only for those who *practise law*. **But if . . . transgressor of law**: a complementary truth implied in this limitation, viz. that they who break this law are practically uncircumcised. Circumcision was originally a token of God's covenant with Abraham: Gen. xvii. 11. The blessings therein promised were a numerous posterity, a special relation to God as His people, the land of Canaan, and that from them should go forth a blessing to all mankind. As first given in Gen. xv. 18, the covenant was not limited by any condition whatever. It assumed the form, not of a law, but of a promise; an absolute promise independent of man's conduct. See Rom. iv. 13. Afterwards, circumcision was added as a condition of a personal share in the promised blessings: Gen. xvii. 10—14. Later still God made another covenant at Sinai, which He confirmed and enlarged in the plains of Moab: Ex. xxiv. 7, Dt. xxix. 1. This covenant promised the favour of God and abundant temporal blessing on condition of obedience to the Law, and threatened His fearful displeasure in case of disobedience: Lev. xxvi., Deut. xxviii. Circumcision was enjoined (Lev. xii. 3) in the Law, and was thus a condition of blessing. It was therefore to the Jews of Paul's day a visible pledge that from Abraham's seed should go forth a blessing for the whole world, and that God would fulfil the covenant which promised personal blessings to those who obey the Law. Consequently, circumcision and the Law always stood together: Jno. vii. 23, Acts xv. 1. To undergo circumcision was to accept the Old Covenant as the basis of man's dealings with God: Acts xv. 5, Gal. v. 3, vi. 13. Consequently, to *a transgressor*

of law **circumcision** was practically void: it had **become uncircumcision.** See further under Gal. v. 2.

26. An inference from *v.* 25, of the fairness of which Paul asks his readers to judge. **Uncircumcision:** an abstract term used for a concrete embodiment of its idea, as in all languages and ages: so ch. iii. 30. Paul dismisses for a moment all thought about the man except that he is uncircumcised. **Keep:** view with jealous care, as when one guards a treasure: Gal. vi. 13, 1 Tim. v. 21, vi. 20, 2 Tim. i. 14. To disobey **the decrees of the Law,** is to cast them away as worthless. **Reckoned:** in the calculation of the great Judge. In *v.* 3, Paul questioned the man as to his own reckoning about himself: he now compels him to answer a question about God's reckoning. "Since the blessings of which circumcision is a pledge are given only on condition of obedience to the Law, will not the heathen who fulfils this condition obtain the blessings? will he not on the great day stand, in the Judge's reckoning, in the position of a circumcised man?" This question implies that outward ordinances are of value, not in themselves, but only as means to moral ends; and that the end is sometimes otherwise gained.

27. A solemn affirmation, following, as in *vv.* 5 and 23, an unanswered question. **Uncircumcision from nature:** absence of circumcision, resulting from the circumstances in which the man was born. See under *v.* 14. **Accomplishing the Law:** attaining the *end* for which it was given, realising in action what the Law sets forth in words. Compare the word *keep* in *v.* 26. Because the Gentile observes with jealous care the decrees of the Law, God will treat him in the judgment as circumcised: and because in him the purpose of the Law has been achieved, his presence in the judgment will pronounce sentence on thousands of Jews in whom that purpose has been utterly defeated. **Shall judge:** proclaim punishment awaiting him. **Thee who etc.:** vivid description of the unfaithful Jew. He has the **letter** of the Law before his eyes: in his body he bears the sign of the covenant: but he is none the less a **transgressor of law.** By his side in the judgment stands a man like Cornelius, in whom the moral purposes of the Law have been to some extent attained. In the impenitent Jew, these purposes have been altogether thwarted. The presence of the Gentile proclaims, in a way not to be misunderstood, the punishment awaiting the Jew. This verse does but re-echo the words of one Greater than Paul: Mt. xii. 41, 42.

The indicative future *shall-judge* and the cases put conditionally

in *vv.* 26 and 14 imply plainly the possibility of the case here supposed. Same teaching in Acts x. 35; and a good example in *vv.* 2, 22. From Rom. iii. 9, 23 we infer that this obedience, tried by the absolute standard of the moral law, was imperfect, and therefore (*v.* 20) could not justify. But it was sufficient to condemn utterly the immoral Jew. Verses 26, 27 also imply that in the great day the persons in question will enter eternal life: for the only distinction then (see *vv.* 7, 8) will be life or destruction. We therefore infer that some heathens will be saved through their obedience, though imperfect, to the law written in their hearts. This does not contradict ch. iii. 20. For their obedience, because imperfect, gives them no claim to salvation. Like those who put faith in Christ, they will be saved by the undeserved favour of God, who will reckon—not their faith: for they never heard the Gospel, but—their imperfect obedience for righteousness. This opens a door of hope for many in Christian lands whose religious advantages have been so few that they have never heard the Gospel in its purity and power. And it warns us not hastily to pronounce on the destiny of some upright men who have not the assurance of salvation enjoyed by many of the servants of Christ.

28, 29. A great principle, stated negatively and positively, and supporting *v.* 27. **Manifest:** set conspicuously before the eyes of men, as in ch. i. 19. It includes the various external forms which distinguish Jews from Gentiles. **Jew . . . Circumcision:** recalling the same words in *vv.* 17 and 25. **In the flesh:** the weak and dying part of man, to which circumcision belongs. Paul says that the real distinction of men is not in outward things, and that the true mark of that distinction is not in the weak body soon to be laid in the grave. **In secret:** so *v.* 16, "God will judge the secret things." **Circumcision of the heart:** commanded in Dt. x. 16 and promised in ch. xxx. 6, as the distinguishing mark of the true servants of God. All who have not this mark are "uncircumcised:" cp. Jer. ix. 25, 26, Acts vii. 51. The infinite superiority of *circumcision of heart*, as compared with that in which many Jews trusted, Paul assumes; and goes on to say how it is brought about, viz. **in Spirit.** This last cannot be the human spirit, as in ch. i. 8: for then it would be an empty repetition of *heart.* Most frequently, it denotes with Paul the Holy *Spirit:* and this gives a good sense here. **Letter:** outward form of the written Law. For the outward rite, only a written command was needed: the inward change can be wrought only by the Spirit of

God. In 2 Cor. iii. 3, 6, written shortly before this epistle, we have an important coincidence of thought; and, especially in *v.* 3, "written not with ink but with the Spirit of God," a confirmation of the above exposition. This passing mention of the Spirit is an allusion to teaching afterwards more fully developed. **Praise not from men but from God:** further description of inward religion, rebuking the vainglory which prompted so much of the outward religion of the Jews. Only that which obtains *praise from God* will avail in the great day.

Verses 28, 29 state, in language recalling frequent and explicit O.T. teaching, a great principle which commends itself to the moral sense of all, and which supports both the statement in *v.* 25 and the inferences drawn from it in *vv.* 26, 27. If the real distinctions are within, uncircumcision will not necessarily deprive a man of the blessings of the covenant and circumcision will not save from condemnation one whose sins are the more inexcusable because committed in spite of a written law and by a circumcised man. To prove this, is the chief purpose of ch. ii., of which *vv.* 28, 29 sum up the result. God will judge men (*v.* 6) according to their works: and a man's works flow from his inmost self. He is (*v.* 11) no respecter of persons: and to respect persons is to treat a man, not according to his inward reality, but according to his appearance and circumstances. Any other theory lands us (*vv.* 21—24) in manifest absurdity. Thus is dispelled all hope of escape from the impartial judgment of God, whether based upon superior knowledge derived from the Law or upon outward and visible union with the people of God.

CHAPTER II. treats of one subject, which naturally divides itself into the three sections I have adopted. Paul began by deducing in *vv.* 1, 2 from ch. i. 18—32 a universal truth. That this truth admits of no exceptions, he proves in *vv.* 3—11; and shows in *vv.* 12—24 that a knowledge of the Law, and in *vv.* 25—29 that circumcision, give a man no right to make himself an exception.

The earnestness and reality of Paul's tone prove that the opinions he combats were actually held and widely spread. Of this we have confirmation in the summary given in Mt. iii. of the teaching of John the Baptist. He saw men who while living in sin trusted for salvation to their relation to Abraham, and meets them with arguments similar to those of this chapter. The ancient literature of the Jews reveals the same errors, opposed indeed by the better teachers, but widely current. So *Thorath Adam* f. 100, ch. 2, "All

Israel shall have a portion in the age to come:" *Shemoth Rabba* f. 138. 13, "Let not heretics and apostates and impious ones of Israel say, Because we are circumcised, we do not descend into hell. What does the Holy and Blessed God? He sends an angel and makes them uncircumcised, that they may descend into hell." We have further and melancholy confirmation of the same in the applicability of the reasoning of this chapter to many Christians, not only in the dark ages, but in our own day and in the most enlightened Churches. Many who do what they know to be wrong rely for salvation, perhaps unconsciously, on their knowledge of the way of salvation—of which knowledge the only result is a readiness to teach or to condemn others less instructed or less orthodox than themselves—or on their outward connection with the people of God or their attention to religious ordinances. By teaching that God looks at the heart and judges all men according to their works, Paul pronounces sentence on all such. This may be seen by reading Christian instead of Jew in this chapter. The substitution only increases the force of the argument. The difference between the words and works of some who bear the name of Christ brings serious dishonour to His name, the name of Him who died to save them, and hinders the work He died to accomplish. God who of old required circumcision of the heart requires to-day that men worship Him in spirit and truth. These deadly errors among ourselves give to this chapter an abiding and infinite worth.

It also teaches the absolute necessity of repentance. Since God is angry with all sin, none except they who turn from sin can enjoy His favour. Consequently none can intelligently seek His favour except those who sincerely endeavour to avoid all sin, and none can intelligently believe that they possess it except those who actually conquer sin. Not only does Paul thus prove man's need of repentance, but by proclaiming God's anger against all sin he does all that words can do to lead men to it.

This chapter is a safeguard against a common perversion of the fundamental doctrine of this epistle, Justification through Faith. And Paul sets up the safeguard before he develops the doctrine to be guarded. DIV. I., of which ch. ii. is so important a part, was introduced in ch. i. 18 as logically necessary for the completeness of Paul's argument. We see now its moral and spiritual necessity. Through failure of some teachers to give prominence to the truths of this chapter, the doctrine of Justification through Faith has been frequently and seriously perverted.

The teaching of ch. ii. holds a place in relation to the rest of the epistle analogous to that of the Epistle of James in relation to the Epistles of Paul; of the 1st Gospel in relation to the rest of the N.T.; and especially of the teaching of John the Baptist in relation to the teaching of Christ. The resemblance is seen in modes of thought and even in phrases and words. It is therefore of great value as a means of harmonizing these very different, and at first sight apparently contradictory, portions of the New Testament.

Notice carefully in chs. i. 19, 20, 24, iii. 12—15, 26, 27 Paul's account of the religious position of the Gentiles. God has manifested Himself to them in the created universe, and has written His law upon their hearts in the inborn moral sense. He has punished them for their forgetfulness and contempt of Him, as shown in their idolatry, by giving them up to gross sin: and in the great day He will judge them according to their obedience or disobedience to the law written within. In that day, some who never heard of Moses will be accepted because, in their careful efforts to do right, the moral purpose of the Law of Moses was in some measure attained.

The chapter from the study of which we now rise receives its entire practical value from the chapters which follow. It is a voice crying in a wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord. Like the greatest of the prophets, it points to that which is greater than itself. We may sum up the whole and its bearing on ch. i. in the words of the Master, "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."

SECTION VIII

YET THE JEWS HAVE REAL ADVANTAGES

CH. III. 1—9

What then is *the advantage of the Jew, or what the profit of circumcision?* [2] *Much, in every way. First, that they were entrusted with the oracles of God.* [3] *For why? If some had no faith, shall their lack of faith make of no effect the faith of God?* [4] *Be it*

not so. Let God be true, but every man a liar: according as it is written, "In order that Thou mayest be justified in Thy words, and mayest overcome when Thou comest into judgment."

[5] *But if our unrighteousness gives proof of God's righteousness, what shall we say?* Is *God, who inflicts* His *anger, unrighteous? (I say* it *as a man.)* [6] *Be it not so. Else, how will God judge the world?* [7] *For if the truth of God through my lie abounded for His glory, why am I also judged as a sinner?* [8] *And why not, according as we are evil-spoken of, and as some affirm that we say, Let us do the evil things that the good things may come? Whose judgment is just.*

[9] *What then? Are we shielding ourselves? Not at all. For we have before-accused both Jews and Greeks that all are under sin.*

This section has two broadly-marked divisions. Verses 1—4 answer an objection suggested by ch. ii. 28, 29: and *vv.* 5—9 overturn a final objection to the teaching of ch. ii., an objection suggested by this answer.

1. Question prompted by the assertion in ch. ii. 25 that to those who keep the Law "circumcision profits," and the assertion in *vv.* 28, 29 that the distinctions which avail are not outward but inward. In **what then** does **the Jew** go beyond the Gentile, and **what** is **the profit of circumcision?**

2. He gains **much,** from **every** point of view. Several proofs come to Paul's mind. As in ch. i. 8, he mentions the **first** of them. A more complete catalogue of advantages is given in ch. ix. 4. **Entrusted-with**: literally *believed:* same word in same sense in 1 Cor. ix. 17, Gal. ii. 7, 1 Th. ii. 4, 1 Tim. i. 11, Tit. i. 3, Lk. xvi. 11, Jno. ii. 24: see note under ch. iv. 25. **The oracles of God**: solemn utterances: so (LXX.) Pss. cvii. 11, xii. 6, Num. xxiv. 4, etc.; and Heb. v. 12, 1 Pet. iv. 11. Same word used by the Greeks for the answers, chiefly prophetic, given by their gods at Delphi or elsewhere to those who sought their counsel. But I have no proof that the phrase is ever used to denote the Old Testament as a whole. It is therefore best to understand by *the oracles of God* the direct utterances of God to man preserved in the O.T. and forming its most important element. Such are Gen. xii. 1—3, 7, xiii. 14, Ezek. ii. 1—8, iii. 1, 3—11; and they are the Holy of Holies of the sanctuary of the Jewish Scriptures. Like the Greek *oracles*, they

were chiefly prophetic. They were *entrusted* to the Jews (cp. Acts vii. 38) for the ultimate good of all men. And possession of them was, in Paul's day, **the** great **advantage** *of the Jew.* While the Greeks were vainly discussing the nature of the gods, the Jews read in the sacred books about the Creator of the world, who became the God of Abraham. This was Paul's *first* proof of *the profit* of being a circumcised Jew rather than a heathen. Another significance of the rite is mentioned in ch. iv. 11.

3. Questions confirming the above proof of the advantage of being a Jew, by calling out and overturning an objection. This objection breaks off the list of advantages Paul was beginning to give. **Had-no-faith:** in Christ and the Gospel. For this was all-important in Paul's day for determining a Jew's relation to God. **If some:** how large a proportion of the nation *had no faith* in Christ, the readers knew well. But the unbelievers were at most only a part of the nation. **Faith** (or *faithfulness*) **of God:** not reliance upon God, as in Mk. xi. 22 (cp. Gal. ii. 16, 20); but that stability and constancy of God on which His servants rely in sure confidence that He will fulfil His promises. For the verse following proves that an attribute of God is in question. See note under ch. iv. 25. **Make-of-no-effect:** to make inoperative and without result: same word in ch. iii. 31, iv. 14, vi. 6, vii. 2, 6, and very often with Paul. If God do not fulfil His promises, His own faithfulness will go for nothing. The ancient oracles were designed to prepare a way for, and to lead men to, Christ and the Gospel. But the mass of the nation had rejected Him and disbelieved the good news. And it might be thought that God will refuse to fulfil promises, e.g. Jer. xxxi. 31ff and Ezek. xxxvi. 25ff, which to so many had failed of their purpose. If so, the oracles have lost their value, and possession of them is no longer an advantage to the Jew. But Paul's question reminds us that in the promises the faithfulness of God is pledged, and that to suppose that they will fail is to suppose that man's want of faith will make God unfaithful. Cp. 2 Tim. ii. 13.

4. An emphatic negative answer to the foregoing question, confirmed by a quotation from the Old Testament. **God** is **true** in that His words always correspond with reality. See under ch. i. 18. If he were unfaithful, he would be untrue. For He foresees whatever He will do. When He spoke the promises, He foresaw Israel's unbelief and His own conduct in reference to it. Consequently, to give promises which He foresaw that He would not fulfil, would be deliberate falsehood. And this we

cannot conceive. Rather let us say that *God* is *true*, and therefore faithful, in His treatment of a race of which every man is guilty of falsehood. The objection is answered. Every believing Jew can claim fulfilment of the promises old and new, even though the mass of the nation has rejected Him in whom the promises were to be fulfilled. Therefore the unbelief of others does not destroy the benefit of being born in a land where the promises are known.

According as it is written: as in ch. i. 17. What Paul has just deduced from the character of God is in harmony with the ancient Scriptures. Paul quotes, word for word, LXX. Ps. li. 4. **Justified:** looked upon, declared to be, and treated as, righteous: see note under ch. iii. 26. **In Thy words:** the matter in which God submits Himself to the judgment of men. **Mayest overcome:** as when a man gains his suit in a court of law. **Comest into judgment:** by submitting his conduct and words to the judgment of men. The Psalmist confesses his own sin, "Against Thee only I have sinned, and that which is evil before Thee I have done;" **in order that,** in condemning that sin, God's words may be seen to be just and He may receive at the bar of man's moral sense a verdict of approval. This implies the justice of God's condemnation of sinners even in Israel.

The exact rendering of the Hebrew is, "In order that Thou mayest be righteous when Thou speakest, be pure when thou judgest." But the common Greek rendering was sufficiently accurate for Paul's purpose. For the words *righteous* and *pure* denote evidently righteousness and purity in the eyes of men: and the whole passage implies that God seeks, even when pronouncing judgment, the approval of men. If so, He may be said to *come into judgment* and to be *justified.*

Paul has now guarded against serious perversion his teaching in ch. ii. 28, 29. Some might infer from it that he looked upon the outward distinctions of the Jew as worthless, and denied the divine origin of the covenant which created them. To Jews, this would be a serious objection to his teaching, and a weapon with which they would oppose it: and on the other hand it might lead those who accepted it to underrate the earlier dispensation. Paul guards against this double danger by declaring the great advantage of the Jews, and by quoting as the chief of them their possession of the records of the historic revelations of God to Israel. And he proves that the worth of these records is not lessened by the unbelief of so many of those to whom for the world's good

they were entrusted. For, in the promises, God's character is involved: and this cannot be set aside by man's unfaithfulness.

Notice here and throughout the epistle Paul's carefulness to defend at every point the divine origin of the Old Covenant.

The great lesson of *vv.* 3, 4 is that God's character is a pledge that, whatever man may do, He will fulfil His promises on the conditions therein expressed. It is easy to apply this to ourselves. As we come to claim the promises of God, we remember that these promises have been by us again and again neglected and doubted and disbelieved; and that at this moment they are set at nought by the mass of mankind. Dare we expect that God will fulfil promises so frequently trampled under foot? Yes: He will fulfil them even to the letter. For our unbelief cannot make Him unfaithful. The inseparable connection of His character and His words is proof that every promise will be fulfilled. And, if so, the promises, however neglected, are of inestimable value to those who possess them. Under them lies, and in them we take hold of, the faithfulness of God.

A tradition embodied, both in the Hebrew text and in the LXX., in the superscription to Ps. li. attributes it to David as an expression of his deep penitence after Nathan's rebuke (2 Sam. xii. 7) of his sin with Bathsheba. And we notice that, in spite of this terrible sin, which was severely punished, God fulfilled His covenanted promise to David recorded in 2 Sam. vii. 4—17. No better example could be found of the faithfulness of God in spite of the unfaithfulness of man.

5—9. The quotation in *v.* 4, which is illustrated by the story of David's deep sin, reminds us that the sin of man, so far from provoking unfaithfulness in God, sometimes brings out into clearer light His faithfulness and truth. But even this truth may be perverted into a last refuge for the man who lives in sin and yet hopes to escape from judgment. By the question in *v.* 5, Paul discovers the refuge; and shows in *vv.* 6—9 how untenable it is.

5. Two questions, in which the readers are supposed to join. They introduce, by way of inference from *v.* 4, an objection. **Unrighteousness:** including the unbelief of most of the Jews, the falsehood of all men, and David's sin. **God's righteousness:** that God is righteous, as in *vv.* 25, 26. This meaning, different from that in *vv.* 21, 22, i. 17, is determined by the question, Is **God unrighteous?** and by the word *justified* in *v.* 4. It is the agreement between God's treatment of men and the principles underlying the Law. Men behold and declare this agreement, and thus

justify God. We often observe that, as in the case of David, man's sin gives occasion for a manifestation of God's strict justice. Paul asks, What shall we infer from this? Shall we say, because **our** *unrighteousness* **gives-proof-of** *God's righteousness*, that *God* is *unrighteous* when *He* **inflicts His anger**, i.e. when he punishes men for their sin? These questions expose a covert attack on the teaching of ch. ii., viz. that to punish sin is unjust, because the punishment reveals the uprightness of God. **As a man**: asking a foolish question.

6—8. An absolute denial, supported by two other questions. The principle underlying the questions of *v.* 5 would make it impossible for **God** to **judge the world**, and would justify an immoral maxim.

7. Following Tischendorf, and Westcott's text, the R.V. reads **but** *if*, making *v.* 7 an additional statement or a new argument. Lachmann and Tregelles read **for** *if*, making it expound or confirm the argument underlying *v.* 6. This latter reading is given in the margins of Westcott and of the Revisers. The documentary evidence seems to me slightly to favour it. Moreover, the argument in *v.* 6 needs exposition and support: and this it finds in *v.* 7. This logical connection might easily be overlooked by a copyist; and the words *but if* might be suggested by the same words in *v.* 5. Consequently, the slight change from *for* to *but* is more easily accounted for than the converse change. For these reasons, I prefer the reading in the Revisers' margin, and take *v.* 7 as expounding the argument underlying *v.* 6.

My lie . . . I also: Paul appeals to his own case. **The truth of God**: as in *v.* 4. **Abound**: work itself out into abundant results: so chs. v. 15, xv. 13. **For His glory**: so 2 Cor. iv. 15: direction and tendency of this abundant manifestation of God's truthfulness, viz. to evoke man's admiration of the moral grandeur of God. Paul declared in *v.* 4 that God is truthful in His treatment and judgment of a race of liars. Therefore every lie, by bringing upon itself the foretold punishment, will give additional proof of God's veracity and thus more abundantly reveal His moral greatness. And if so, every man in *the world* may claim immunity from punishment. Every Jew and Gentile may come before the judgment-seat and say, **Why am** *I also* **judged as a sinner?** Even Paul himself, if all that his enemies said about him were true, could say this. Admit once this principle, and *God* cannot *judge the world*. Notice how the language and tone of this verse differ from the coldness of Western thought and speech. Paul meets a man who claims immunity from punishment because his sin brings

glory to God; and at once puts himself by the man's side and says that he also and everyone else may claim the same immunity.

8. Another disproof of the principle underlying the question in *v.* 5. **Evil-spoken-of:** *blasphemed*, as in ch. ii. 24. **We:** probably Paul and other Christian teachers. Some spoke evil of Paul and his companions by saying that they taught men to **do bad things in order that good** results might follow. Without discussing the truth of this charge, Paul makes use of a correct principle underlying it. The actions which it is unjust to punish it must be just to perform. If the end justifies the means, a man cannot be blamed who deliberately does wrong in order to bring about a good result. But this is what Paul's enemies bring as a charge against him. By so doing, they admit that the principle involved is wrong: and if so, the question in *v.* 5*b* must be answered, as Paul has answered it, in the negative. **Whose judgment:** the sentence pronounced by God on those who assert the principle attributed to Paul, a principle which he agrees with his opponents in condemning.

9. What then? how do matters stand? so chs. vi. 15, xi. 7. **Are-we-shielding-ourselves?** literally *holding before ourselves*, i.e. as an excuse. This plain grammatical meaning (R.V. marg.) of the word here used gives good sense, and is therefore better than the unintelligible R.V. text, *are we in worse case than they?* We have seen that the principle called in question in *v.* 5, viz. that it is unjust of God to punish sins which give proof of His justice, involves two serious moral consequences, viz. that not even a liar could be condemned as a sinner, and that it would be right to do wrong in order that good may come. We must therefore either accept these consequences or deny the principle which involves them. Paul asks, Which alternative do we take? Is it our object to prove that there are no moral distinctions and will be no judgment? Are we, by stating this alternative, *holding before ourselves* a shield behind which we may escape punishment? **Not at all,** or *in every way not:* absolute rejection of this side of the alternative. This rejection is proved by the foregoing argument in chs. i. 18—ii. 29: **for we have before-accused etc. Both Jews and Greeks, all:** the latter in § 4, and the former in §§ 5—7. **Under sin:** so ch. vii. 14: looked upon as a crushing weight *under* which the sinner lies, or a power from whose grasp he cannot escape. Notice here an assertion, even more plain than ch. ii. 1, that all men are sinners. This tremendous and universal charge is complete proof that the arguments in *vv.* 5—8 are not an excuse for sin.

Verses **5—9** reveal Paul's purpose in choosing for his proof-text

Ps. li. 4. It suggests a truth which may be perverted into a last excuse for sin. David's sin showed forth the sinlessness of God, and thus served a moral purpose: and all sin will eventually do the same. But is it not unjust for God to punish the sin of which He makes use to manifest His own glory and to accomplish His own purposes? Such a question is proof of human folly. Paul meets it with an indignant negative. If this be unjust, to judge the world is unjust and therefore impossible. In this world of liars every man might say, My lie, by bringing on my head the threatened punishment, will show forth the truthfulness of God. If others escape because their sin glorifies God, why may not I also escape? Thus the whole world would find excuse. Again, since all sin will eventually reveal the absolute uprightness of God, a man might deliberately go into sin with this in view. It would be right to do wrong: because all wrong will show forth the righteousness of God. A man might justly do the very things which our enemies bring as a charge against us that we teach men to do. But our opponents, by making this a charge against us, condemn it. In their condemnation, I agree. Hence either God is just when He punishes the sin of which He makes use to accomplish His own purposes, or the teaching with which we are falsely charged is right and the judgment day is a fiction. Which alternative do we accept? Are we weaving a cover for our sin? The arguments in chs. i. 18—ii. 29 prove that we are not. We have already charged all men with sin, and proved that all sinners are exposed to punishment. The question in *v.* 5*b* is answered: a shield which would equally protect all sinners protects none.

Ch. iii. 1—9 supplements ch. ii. The man who, in ch. ii. 2, claimed to escape the universal sentence has failed to make good his claim: he can hide himself neither (*vv.* 3—11) in the mercy of God, nor (*vv.* 12—24) in his possession of the Law, nor (*vv.* 25—29) in circumcision. Yet he cannot say that the accuser who has cast to the winds his excuses has thereby cast to the winds the reality of the advantages given by God to his fathers and to himself: for the privileges which he has failed to use are many and great. He cannot appeal to the glory which will accrue to God from his condemnation as a reason why the condemnation should not be carried out: for this appeal, if valid, would be valid for the whole world. The prisoner stands without reply before his accuser and before God.

SECTION IX

THE JEWS ARE CONDEMNED BY THEIR OWN LAW

CH. III. 10—20

According as it is written, "*There is not a righteous* man, *not even one.* [11] *There is not an understanding* one: *there is not* a man *who seeks out God.* [12] *All have turned away: together they have become useless. There is none that does kindness: there is not even one.*" [13] "*An opened grave, their throat* is: *with their tongues they were beguiling.*" "*Poison of asps* is *under their lips.*" [14] "*Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness.*" [15] "*Quick* are *their feet to pour out blood . . .* [16] *ruin and calamity* are *in their ways:* [17] *and a way of peace they have not known.*" [18] "*There is no fear of God before their eyes.*"

[19] *But we know that so many things as the Law says, to those in the Law it speaks, in order that every mouth may be shut, and all the world may be brought under the judgment of God.* [20] *Because from works of law will no flesh be justified in His sight: for through law* comes *knowledge of sin.*

Paul will now prove that the accusation in *v.* 9, which sums up the result of the argument of DIV. I., is in harmony with the ancient Scriptures: **according as it is written**: cp. *v.* 4, ch. i. 17. This he does by grouping together, without mentioning the human authors, five passages from the Psalms and one from the Book of Isaiah. The first asserts universality of sin in the Psalmist's day: four others imply that the sin even of circumcised Jews is hateful to God and will receive punishment: and the last confirms the teaching of ch. i. 21 that outward sin arises from inward neglect of God. Paul quotes for the most part word for word from the LXX. The differences between the quotations and the original text do not affect the argument. Examination will show that in each case the ancient writer means all, and more than all, Paul's argument requires.

10—12. From Ps. xiv. 1—3, repeated in Ps. liii. 1—3. God looks down from heaven to see if there are any who show their intelligence by seeking to know and please Him. Here is the result. His eye cannot detect one righteous man. Not one acts wisely, or makes it the object of life to find out God. All have strayed from the right path: all have together failed to attain their Maker's purpose. Not even one does good. Evidently the Psalmist's words include Jews as well as Gentiles. Consequently Paul's charge in *v.* 9 is but a repetition of an O.T. declaration about Jews and Gentiles of an earlier day.

13—17. Descriptions of bad men. **An opened grave:** so Jer. v. 16. So deadly were the arrows of the Chaldeans that the quiver from which they came seemed like a *grave opened* to receive the dead whom the arrows slew. But more deadly than arrows are the words of the men described in Ps. v. 9. They encourage or provoke to acts of violence and bloodshed: the opening of their mouth involves the opening of a grave to receive those whose death will result from their words. Hence, in the vividness of Eastern imagination, **their throat** is called a *grave opened* to receive the slain. David himself, if not with his lips yet with his pen, dug a grave for Uriah: 2 Sam. xi. 14. That the word *throat* denotes here, as in Ps. cxv. 7, an organ of speech, is proved by the words *tongues* and *lips* following. **Beguiling: their tongues** being used as instruments of guile. This made their words as dangerous and deadly as **poison of asps,** which lies concealed **under their lips:** word for word from Ps. cxl. 3. The Psalmist cries for deliverance from bloody and deceitful men. He is afraid of their secret plots. The lips with which the plots are communicated to others, and thus matured, are as deadly to him as the poison of a serpent. He appeals to God against them, and calls for their destruction. **Whose mouth etc.:** from Ps. x. 7: a description of proud men who lay snares for the poor and innocent, and expect to escape, saying that God has forgotten their deeds and will not punish. The Psalmist appeals to God as one who beholds mischief and spite, and will requite it. This teaching of the Psalms is confirmed by a quotation from Isa. lix. 7, 8. Here are men whose **feet** are **quick** when their purpose is **to shed blood.** If you trace their steps, you find that they have left behind them **ruin and calamity.** War and violence are their only element: **and a way of peace they have not known.** Yet these men were Israelites: for the prophet declares (*v.* 2) that their sins have separated them from their God. Therefore,

in his view, God is angry with the sins even of those who possess the Law and bear in their bodies the seal of the covenant.

18. An explanation of the conduct described in the foregoing quotations: from Ps. xxxvi. 1. As the writer ponders the transgression of the wicked, he learns its cause, absence of **fear of God.** He is not **before their eyes** as an object inspiring *fear:* hence their wickedness.

The real force of the above quotations lies not so much in the words quoted as in the entire context, and in the fact that such quotations might be indefinitely multiplied. They are a fair sample of the entire O.T., and prove its complete agreement with the teaching of Rom. ii. For the bad men here described were undoubtedly Jews.

On what principle, and with what precise object, did Paul select these quotations? We cannot conceive that he gives here a universal, or even a comparatively fair, description of the nation. He has rather gathered together into one awful picture the very darkest lines of the many delineations of character contained in the Jewish Scriptures. The men before us are of the worst kind. The opening of their mouths is the opening of a grave: they are deadly as vipers: their language is a curse: the prospect of murder hurries them on with rapid steps: where they have been, destruction and calamity are: and how to walk so as to be at peace, they know not. The delineations form one picture: *vv.* 13, 14 describe their words; *vv.* 15—17, their actions; and *v.* 18 gives the cause of the whole. Paul has, in my view, put together this mosaic of sin in order to prove that the O.T. teaches that Jewish privileges do not in themselves save even from the lowest depths of sin. He does not say that the objector in ch. ii. is as bad as these men. But whatever he pleads for himself these men might have pleaded. These bad men, whose names are forgotten but in whose character is plainly written the condemnation of God, arise from oblivion to declare that outward privileges, even though they come from God, and outward connection with the people of God, do not necessarily save.

19. A principle which both readers and opponents **know,** and which gives divine authority to the foregoing quotations. That quotations from the Psalms and the Book of Isaiah are spoken of as a voice of **the Law,** implies that these books are an authoritative declaration of God's will concerning man's conduct and of the principles on which He governs, and will judge, the world; and prove that in Paul's view even man's cry to God for

deliverance, e.g. Ps. cxl., was also in some real sense God's voice to man. **To those in the Law**: those to whom the sacred books were given, and to whom they were therefore the moral element of life and action. Cp. 1 Cor. ix. 21: "in law of Christ." **It speaks**: consequently the foregoing quotations are God's voice to Paul's readers.

In order that etc.: purpose for which the words quoted from the Psalms and the Book of Isaiah were written. **Every mouth shut**: without excuse for sin. It recalls the excuses in ch. ii. **All the world**: Jews and Gentiles, without exception. **Under judgment**: exposed to punishment, because without excuse for their sin. Paul here asserts that God gave the Law, which finds in the O.T. permanent literary embodiment, in order that every man may stand before Him silent and condemned, i.e. in conscious and helpless exposure to punishment. Notice that this purpose of the Law of Moses, of which the teaching of the prophets was a divinely-inspired exposition, is identical with the purpose of God's manifestation of Himself in Nature, as stated in ch. i. 20: "that they may be without excuse." We need not infer that this was the only purpose of these revelations: see Ps. cxix. 105.

This purpose was far from the thought of the writers of the Psalms. It therefore implies that these last had an Author and purpose greater than the human authors and their immediate purpose. It therefore confirms the proof, afforded by the use of the term *the Law* to describe the quoted Psalms, that in them spoke One greater than man.

20. Because etc.: a universal principle stated in order to explain how the Law brings all men silent and guilty before God, and thus explaining why God used this means for this end. These words recall Ps. cxliii. 2. The writer prays God not to enter into judgment with him, on the ground that in His sight no living person is or will be counted righteous. That no one **will**, implies that no one can **be justified. From works of law**: actions in obedience to a written prescription, looked upon as a source or means of the judge's approval. **Flesh**: the material of which our bodies are composed: see note under ch. viii. 11. Since it is the only form in which human nature presents itself to us, *all flesh* includes all mankind. It represents humanity as limited by the conditions imposed by the material of the bodies in which we live and through which we act. We shall learn from ch. vi. 12 that the sin which prevents our justification by works has its throne in the flesh.

This universal denial excludes justification by works both in this life and at the bar of God.

For through law etc.: explanation and confirmation of the foregoing assertion. That these words are neither explained nor proved, reveals Paul's confidence that they need neither explanation nor proof. They appeal to the experience of all. We find that all progress in knowledge of the Law reveals a law which we have broken. It is true that in Christ we find deliverance from the power and stain of sin: consequently, by revealing with increasing clearness our own sinfulness and thus driving us to Christ for salvation, the Law leads us day by day to closer conformity to the will of God. But this is wrought by the Gospel, and only indirectly by the Law; not by obedience to a command, but by belief of the Gospel. Now, if the Law reveals disobedience in all to whom it is given, it cannot justify. For justification through law can be obtained only by obedience. Therefore, by imparting **knowledge of sin,** the Law reveals its own powerlessness to justify.

Verse 20 gives complete proof of the assertion in *v.* 19 that consciousness of guilt is not only an actual result of the Law but the purpose and end for which it was given. God gave to men commands which He knew they would not obey; and threatened punishment in case of disobedience. What was His purpose in so doing? Not directly to produce obedience. For, if so, the Law was a failure: and God's foreknowledge makes it inconceivable that He would use means which He knew would not succeed. We are therefore, even apart from his apostolic authority, compelled to accept Paul's assertion that the actual result of the Law was also its designed result. God gave it in order to make us conscious of our lost state, and thus to prepare us for a revelation of righteousness through Christ. In ages to come, we shall look back upon the Law, not as a failure, but as a guardian-slave (Gal. iii. 24) who led us to Christ, and as an essential link of the chain which raised us from sin to eternal obedience and blessedness.

Notice how much *vv.* 19, 20 increase the force of the foregoing quotations. In the quoted words the Law speaks, and declares how God will treat those to whom it is given: and God's purpose in giving the Law was precisely the purpose which, by the arguments of DIV. I., Paul has sought to accomplish.

THE LAW. A law is a setting forth, by an authority claiming

to determine and limit the action of men, of what they are to do and not to do. So Prov. iii. 1: "My son, forget not my law, but let thy heart keep my commands." The state claims this right over its citizens; and therefore its enactments are called *laws*. And, since without penalties enactments are powerless, the laws of the state announce both what the citizens are to do and not to do and the punishment of disobedience. The laws of an absolute monarch are an announcement of the principles on which he will treat his subjects.

On the ultimate foundation of law in the inborn moral sense of man, see the important quotation on p. 79.

To Israel God was the only King and Lawgiver and Judge. Consequently, in the Bible, unless otherwise stated, the word *law* denotes always the Law of God.

In Gen. xxvi. 5 God says, "Abraham obeyed My voice, and kept My charge, My commandments, My ordinances, and My laws." At Sinai God gave to Israel, through the agency of Moses, a body of definite prescriptions, to be henceforth their national law, and the basis of God's future dealings with the nation whom He had joined to Himself by solemn covenant. A rudimentary code of civil law is said to have been written by Moses at Sinai: Ex. xxiv. 4. Statutes of sacrificial worship were added, each called *a law:* Lev. vi. 9, 14, 25. In the plains of Moab, shortly before his death, Moses restated the Law, wrote it, and publicly gave the book to Israel as the authoritative standard of the will of God, according to which the people were to live and according to which they will be rewarded or punished: Dt. xxxi. 9, 26. Henceforth we read of *the Book of the Law:* Josh. i. 8, viii. 34, 2 Kgs. xxii. 8, 11, Neh. viii. 1. The Book itself, as being the authoritative and only permanent embodiment of God's will, is called *the Law:* 1 Kgs. ii. 3, 1 Chr. xvi. 40, 2 Chr. xxiii. 18, xxxi. 3, xxxv. 26, Ezra iii. 2. Hence the term *the Law* became, and is still with the Jews, the common title of the Pentateuch: Rom. iii. 21, Lk. xxiv. 44, Acts xxiv. 14.

The ordinances given in the wilderness are attributed to Moses in 1 Cor. ix. 9, Heb. ix. 19, x. 28, Lk. ii. 22, xxiv. 44, Jno. i. 17, 45, vii. 19, 23, Acts xiii. 39, xv. 5. A narrative in Genesis is quoted in Gal. iv. 21 as *the Law*. In Rom. iii. 10—18, Jno. x. 34, quotations from the Psalms and one from the Book of Isaiah have the authority of *the Law;* these books being thus placed on a level with the Pentateuch. Thus extended, *the Law* denotes in the N.T., unless otherwise defined, the Jewish Scriptures looked upon as a rule of

life given by God to man, and as a declaration of the principles of God's government of the world.

Looking now at the contents of these books, we notice that one spirit animates the whole. Its voice is, Do this and live. This is the essence of law: and this principle assumes authoritative form in the Old Covenant and in the Jewish Scriptures. The written word is the body, this principle is the spirit, of the Law. Hence the apparent variety in the use of the word. Just as the word *man* refers sometimes to bodily form, at other times to mental and moral character, so the term *the Law* refers sometimes to the Pentateuch and the other Holy Scriptures, and at other times to the great principle which inspires these ancient writings, viz. that God will treat men according to their deeds. The special reference must in each case be determined by the context. But in all cases the underlying meaning is the same. It is unsafe to rely in a translation upon the presence or absence of the definite article. But in the original the anarthrous term *law* refers, I believe, almost always to the general principle, Do this and live; and *the Law* to the historical and literary form in which this principle took shape in the ears and eyes and thoughts of Israel.

We have already met the word *law* in various connections of thought. We saw in Rom. ii. 12 that possession of the Law separated mankind into two great theological divisions; that (*v.* 13) not those who hear, but those who obey, the words written therein will be justified; that (*vv.* 17, 20, 23) in possession of the Book some trusted for salvation, and thought themselves wise because instructed from its pages; and that (*v.* 24) by transgressing the written word they brought dishonour to God. The contents of the Book were written in the hearts of the Gentiles, who thus became to themselves, in some measure, what the Book was to the Jews: *v.* 14. By this means Gentiles sometimes accomplish, without having read them, the purpose for which the written commands were given to Israel: *v.* 27. The great purpose of the Law, wrought out unconsciously by its human agents, was to leave all men without excuse for sin; and, because by nature none are able to obey it, to bring all men under conscious liability to punishment.

A threefold purpose is, in this epistle, attributed to the Law; viz. that (ch. v. 20) through it the one sin of Adam might multiply itself into the many sins of his children, that (ch. iii. 19) all sinners and therefore all men may be without excuse for sin and may know that God will punish them, and that (ch. vii. 13) they may become

conscious of the indwelling and irresistible power of sin which prevents them from doing what they know to be right and even wish to perform. In other words, the Law was given to Israel and written in the hearts of all men, in order to bring about in all men actual personal sin, and consciousness of inward bondage and of coming punishment. These are the divinely-chosen and mysterious steps to a glorious goal, viz. actual obedience to the will of God, begun imperfectly on earth and to be fully realised in the life to come. But beyond these first steps the Law cannot lead us.

DIVISION I., embracing chs. i. 18—iii. 20, is a proof of the assertion in ch. i. 18. The proof and the defence of it against prevalent objection are now complete. By pointing to God's revelation of Himself in Nature, and to the immoral results of ungodliness, Paul proved in ch. i. 19—32 that God is angry with all ungodliness and sin. And if so, since all are sinners, God is angry with all men: ch. ii. 1. In *v.* 2, Paul repeats, after complete proof, the assertion in ch. i. 18. To expect exemption from this universal principle because of God's forbearance, is a mark of ignorance: ch. ii. 3—11. No reason for such expectation is found either in (*vv.* 12—24) the Law or in (*vv.* 25—29) circumcision. Yet the possession of the Law is to the Jew an advantage which the unbelief of the mass of the nation does not set aside: ch. iii. 1—4. Their unbelief will but demonstrate the righteousness of God; yet even this will not save them from punishment: *vv.* 5—8. In ch. iii. 9, Paul triumphantly combines the assertion in ch. i. 18 and its universal application in ch. ii. 1, 2. In ch. iii. 10—20, he shows that what he has proved agrees with the teaching of the ancient Scriptures.

DIV. I. was introduced to show that the righteousness revealed in the Gospel by faith proves the Gospel to be a power of God to save all that believe. The proof is now complete. Paul has shown us a world perishing because of God's anger against sin: therefore, if the good news from God announces God's favour towards all that believe, it is indeed to them the mighty arm of God stretched out to save.

Notice the clearness and force of Paul's arguments. They rest in part on great principles which commend themselves to the moral sense of all, and which underlie the teaching of the entire Old Testament; and in part on social facts within the immediate observation of Paul's readers, and to some extent, even at this distance of time, within our own observation. If we admit the

principles and facts, Paul's arguments compel us to admit his conclusions. Notice also that, just as in chs. ii. 6, 13, 24, 29, iii. 4 he shows that the principles from which his conclusions are drawn are in harmony with the Old Testament, so in ch. iii. 10—18 he shows that his conclusions are in harmony with the same. So conclusive is his reasoning that we have forgotten the apostolic authority of the reasoner. If DIV. I. were only a fragment from an unknown author, it would still carry complete conviction.

Observe carefully Paul's use of the Jewish Scriptures. He nowhere appeals to isolated or difficult texts. Each passage is a representative of many others teaching the same truth. Examination proves that each quotation fairly involves the principle it was adduced to support. We may well take this great teacher as a pattern of Old Testament exposition.

In DIV. I., Paul has not carried us above the level of the Old Covenant. He has only gathered into one focus whatever the ancient Scriptures, looked upon as law, said and proved in former days. The name of Christ has occurred only once ; and then not as the Saviour, but as the Judge, of the world. DIV. I. bears to the rest of the epistle the relation which the Old Covenant bears to the New. It is therefore a testimony to the permanent moral worth of the Old Testament.

We have heard the Law : it has pronounced our condemnation and made us conscious of our need of salvation. And, since God is angry with all sin, no salvation will supply our need except one which makes us free from the guilt, the power, and the stain of sin.

DIVISION II

JUSTIFICATION AND ITS RESULTS

CHS. III. 21—V

SECTION X. JUSTIFICATION THROUGH FAITH AND THROUGH CHRIST

CH. III. 21—26

But now, apart from law, a *righteousness of God has been manifested, witness being borne to it by the Law and the Prophets,* [22] a *righteousness of God through belief of Jesus Christ, for all that believe. For there is no difference:* [23] *for all have sinned, and fall short of the glory of God;* [24] *being justified freely by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus,* [25] *whom God set forth* as a *propitiation through faith, in His blood, for demonstration of His righteousness, because of the passing over of the before-committed sins in the forbearance of God,* [26] *for the demonstration of His righteousness in the present season, in order that He may be Himself righteous and a justifier of him* that has *faith of Jesus.*

21. But now etc.: sudden and joyful transition from the condemnation of the Law to the light of the Gospel. **Apart from law:** independent of, and in some sense contradicting, the great principle underlying the Jewish Scriptures, viz. that the favour of God is conditioned by obedience to His commands. It is practically the same as "apart from works of law" in *v.* 28. **Righteousness of God:** as in ch. i. 17. **Manifested:** set conspicuously before the eyes of men, as in ch. i. 19. Compare and contrast ch. i. 17. The righteousness of God **has-been-***manifested* (perfect tense) once for all by the appearance of Christ and by His announcement of salvation: day by day "it is revealed by faith" (present tense), i.e. brought into the consciousness of each one, as each one believes. **Witness-being-borne-to-it:** day by day, as the ancient Scriptures are read. This testimony was mentioned in ch. i. 2: and a specimen was given in ch. i. 17. Much more of it will be given in chs. iv., ix., x. **The Law:** the Pentateuch only. **The Prophets:** the other chief division of the Jewish Scriptures: cp. Mt. v. 17,

vii. 12, xi. 13, xxii. 40. A fuller description is given in Lk. xxiv. 44: "the Law of Moses and the Prophets and Psalms." The phrase here is not only a common division of the O.T. but describes two conspicuous elements which run through the whole: for very much of *the Law* is expressly or symbolically prophetic, *and the Prophets* announce or rather reiterate God's will about man's conduct. The word *law* refers to the principle of law, which is the great feature of the Pentateuch: the term *the Law* refers to the book in which it assumes written form.

22*a*. Additional information about the **righteousness of God,** viz. the channel through which, and the persons for whom, it comes. **Belief** (or *faith*) **of Jesus Christ:** an assurance of which Christ is Himself the personal object, a sure confidence that the words of Christ are true and will come true because they are spoken by One who cannot deceive and who is able to perform His own promises. Same construction with the genitive in *v.* 26, Gal. ii. 16 twice, iii. 22, Eph. iii. 12, Ph. iii. 9, Mk. xi. 22. **For all that believe:** persons for whom the gift of righteousness is proclaimed in the Gospel. The emphatic word *all*, like "everyone" in ch. i. 16, includes Jew and Gentile, whether previously moral or immoral. We can conceive the favour of God given through faith, yet only to a portion of those that believe. These words declare that faith is the only condition.

Some have supposed that, although salvation is proclaimed for all who believe, God has secretly resolved to bestow only upon a portion of the race selected by Himself those influences without which repentance and faith are impossible. If so, salvation is limited, not really by man's unbelief, but by God's eternal purpose. This view seems to me at variance with the teaching of this verse: and I hope to prove in a note under ch. ix. 33 that it is utterly at variance with the teaching of Paul.

This verse states the personal object of our faith, but not its object-matter. It tells us whom, but not expressly what, we must believe. But there can be no belief without something believed, no mental rest in an idea without an idea in which to rest. See note under ch. iv. 25. And evidently the object-matter of saving faith is the good news announced by Christ: so 1 Th. ii. 13, Mk. i. 15. We obtain the favour of God by belief that through the death of Christ God bestows His favour as a gift upon us who believe, this belief being reliance with all the interests at stake on the word and faithfulness and power of God.

The conspicuous phrase *righteousness of God* in *v.* 21 and again

in *v.* 22 at once recalls the same phrase in ch. i. 17; and takes up and carries forward the thread of discourse which was broken off in ch. i. 18 in order to prove the need of the salvation announced in *vv.* 16, 17. This proof is given in chs. i. 18—iii. 20, which I have comprised in DIV. I., an integral portion of the epistle, the dark background of that Gospel of salvation which is its chief matter. Under this deep shadow we went suddenly in ch. i. 18, and emerged from it as suddenly in ch. iii. 21; and on emerging we found ourselves where we were before we entered it. This return to, and restatement of, teaching stated at the beginning of the doctrinal part of the epistle marks out this teaching as the foundation-stone of the Epistle to the Romans.

Paul has now taught us that it has been publicly announced that, without requiring previous obedience to the Law but in harmony with the teaching of Moses and the prophets, God bestows, as a gift, a state which He approves; and that this gift is obtained by believing the words of Christ and is designed for all that believe. In other words, he teaches that God accepts as righteous all who believe the glad tidings of salvation announced by Christ. This doctrine, in the equivalent form of justification through faith, meets us again in *vv.* 24, 26, 28, 30; is illustrated from the O.T., in the form of "faith reckoned for righteousness," throughout ch. iv.; and is made in ch. v. 1—11 a ground of exultant hope of coming glory. The same doctrine is with equal clearness stated and defended in the Epistle to the Galatians. That his readers are justified, is taught in 1 Cor. vi. 11, Tit. iii. 7; and that by faith they are already in the way of salvation, which is the same doctrine in another form, is stated in other epistles bearing the name of Paul. By an important coincidence, the same doctrine in the same phrase is in Acts xiii. 39 attributed to Paul in a recorded address; as is similar teaching in chs. xvi. 31, xxvi. 18. All this taken together is decisive documentary evidence that as matter of historic fact Paul taught, in language equivalent to that used in Rom. i. 17, iii. 21, 22, that God accepts as righteous, in spite of their past sins, all who believe the Gospel. This teaching, which we may conveniently speak of as JUSTIFICATION THROUGH FAITH, is the FIRST and chief FUNDAMENTAL DOCTRINE of the Epistle to the Romans and of the theology of Paul.

We now ask, How came Paul to claim, without proof, his readers' belief for this important and fundamental doctrine? An answer is suggested by the fact that although the phrase "justified through faith" is found only with Paul, the equivalent doctrine

that all who believe the Gospel are in the way of salvation is found in other N.T. documents altogether different in thought and phrase from the epistles of Paul. In the Fourth Gospel Christ is said to have frequently taught that all who believe in Him will have and already have eternal life: e.g. chs. iii. 15ff, 35f, v. 24, vi. 29, 35, 40, 47. If so, they already possess by faith the favour of God. Similar teaching, in Mk. i. 15, xvi. 16; Lk. viii. 12, xviii. 14. And in Mt. viii. 10, ix. 22, 29, xv. 28, xvii. 20, xxi. 21 we have, attributed to Christ, teaching wonderfully in harmony with the same. So also Jas. ii. 1, 14—26, v. 15; 1 Pet. ii. 6, 7, 1 Jno. v. 1—13. We notice also that the doctrine that God accepts as righteous all who believe in Him is unknown to writers earlier than Christ except somewhat vaguely as a prophecy of the future, e.g. in Hab. ii. 4, Isa. xxviii. 16; but that since His day it has been taught by many calling themselves His disciples. All this is decisive documentary evidence that this doctrine was actually taught not only by Paul but by Christ. And that Paul learnt it from Christ, he asserts in Gal. i. 11. That it was accepted by all Christians everywhere because they knew that it was taught by Christ, is a complete explanation, and the only conceivable explanation, of the confidence with which Paul assumes it without proof and makes it the foundation-stone of his theology. See further in Diss. vi. of my *Galatians*.

22*b*, 23. A short recapitulation of DIV. I., proving the universal need of salvation implied in the universal assertion *all that believe;* just as DIV. I., introduced in ch. i. 18, justifies similar words in *v.* 16. **For there is no difference:** summary of ch. ii. Same words in same connection in ch. x. 12. They are here supported by a reassertion of the teaching in chs. ii. 1, iii. 9, 19: **for all have sinned.** The Greek aorist includes all sins in all ages up to the moment of writing. It must therefore be translated by the English perfect. For our preterite pushes the event into the past, and thus gives to it a definiteness, as separated from the present, which the Greek "indefinite" tense has not.

Glory: admiration evoked by an object in the mind of a beholder, or that quality in the object which evokes admiration: see under ch. i. 21. In chs. i. 23, vi. 4, ix. 23 *the glory* **of God** denotes the manifested grandeur of God evoking His creatures' admiration; and in chs. iii. 7, iv. 20, xi. 36, xv. 7 the admiration thus evoked. So "the glory of Jehovah" in Ex. xvi. 10, xxiv. 16, 17, and frequently in the O.T.; cp. Lk. ii. 9. But this meaning does not give good sense here and in ch. v. 2. In ch. ii. 7, 10, the word

glory, i.e. a splendour evoking admiration, describes the reward of the righteous: so ch. viii. 18, 21, 1 Cor. ii. 7, xv. 43, Col. i. 27, iii. 4. They will share the splendour of Christ: Rom. viii. 17, 2 Th. ii. 14. This must be the meaning in Rom. v. 2: "hope of *the glory of God*;" and it gives good sense here. For this future splendour, although concealed from view, is a present possession of the servants of Christ. Their afflictions are working out for them "an eternal weight of *glory*," and already they can say "we have a house eternal in the heavens:" 2 Cor. iv. 17, v. 1. Thus understood, *the glory of God* here and in ch. v. 2 is the splendour which God gives, just as "righteousness of God" in chs. iii. 21, 22, i. 17, x. 3 is a righteousness which God gives. In both cases, the divine gift is related to a divine attribute; but must be carefully distinguished from it. **Fall-short-of**: fall behind others, or fail to reach some goal set before them. Believers are already (ch. viii. 17) sharers of Christ's heritage of glory: but of this heritage they who have not by faith obtained a righteousness of God are destitute. In this sense, through their sin, they *fall short of the glory of God*. The middle voice scarcely implies that they are conscious of their failure: it implies only that it reacts in some way upon themselves.

24—26. A participial clause, grammatically subordinate to *v.* 23, followed by other subordinate clauses, but really introducing a new and all-important doctrine, viz. justification through the death of Christ. By introducing this great doctrine in this subordinate form, Paul intimates its logical connection with the doctrine of universal sin and failure. The prominence of this last doctrine throughout this epistle reveals its large place in the thought of Paul.

24. Justified: a judge's decision in a man's favour, as in ch. ii. 13. But in this last passage the word refers to the day of judgment; whereas here the present tense **being**-*justified* refers to a judgment now going on. Same word in same present tense in *vv.* 26, 28, ch. iv. 5. That it is introduced without further explanation, implies that its meaning is involved in what Paul has already said. If, as we learnt under *vv.* 21, 22, God accepts as righteous all who believe the Gospel, then is the Gospel a formal announcement of justification for all who believe it. They have no need to wait till the day of judgment to know their destiny: the judge has already pronounced their acquittal. In the Gospel, they read their own justification. It is (ch. i. 17) revealed by faith. Thus day by day men are *being justified* as one and another put faith in Christ. Paul could not say "having

been justified:" for this is not true of *all* who *have sinned*. Moreover, he does not speak of justification in the past tense till ch. v. 1. He refers to it now only generally as a process going on. Cp. 2 Cor. v. 19: "reconciling the world to Himself."

Freely: as a gift: so Rev. xxi. 6, xxii. 17. **By His grace**: source of the gift, in the undeserved favour of God, i.e. the love of God contemplating its objects with a purpose of blessing: see under ch. i. 5.

Redemption, or *ransoming-off*: a setting free on payment, or by payment, of a price, combining the ideas of liberation and price. Same word in ch. viii. 23, 1 Cor. i. 30, Eph. i. 7, 14, iv. 30, Col. i. 14, Heb. ix. 15, xi. 35; simpler cognates in Mt. xx. 28, Mk. x. 45, Lk. xxiv. 21, Tit. ii. 14, 1 Pet. i. 18, Lk. i. 68, ii. 38, Heb. ix. 12, Acts vii. 35. These cognates are common in classic Greek for liberation of captives by payment of a ransom; and in the LXX. for the liberation by price or substitute of those, e.g. the firstborn, on whom the Mosaic Law had a claim. Cp. Ex. xiii. 13, Num. xviii. 15, Lev. xxvii. 27—33, Num. iii. 46—51. Like most others denoting a combination of ideas, these words are sometimes used when only one of the ideas is present, viz. liberation: so Ex. vi. 6, xv. 13, etc. This last idea is evidently present here. For, "to justify the ungodly" (see Rom. iv. 5) involves liberation from the ruin which is the due penalty of sin: see chs. iv. 5, vi. 22, 23. Whether, and in what sense, this liberation involves payment of a price, we must learn from the further teaching of Paul. **Through the** *redemption* **etc.**: channel through which the justification goes forth from God; just as "faith" is the channel (*vv.* 22, 28, 30) through which it reaches the sinner. **In Christ Jesus**: His personality being the element or environment in which the liberation takes place. This important phrase, peculiar to Paul, except that in a slightly different form it is very common in the Gospel and First Epistle of John, (see also 1 Pet. iii. 16, Jude 1,) meets us again in chs. vi. 11, 23, viii. 1, 39. It is a conspicuous and important feature of the teaching of Paul. See under ch. vi. 11.

25. Whom God set forth etc.: further explanation of the redemption in Christ. **Propitiation**: cognates in 1 Jno. ii. 2, iv. 10, Heb. ii. 17, Lk. xviii. 13; also (LXX.) Lev. iv. 20, 26, 31, 35, xvi. 30, 32—34, Num. xvi. 46, 47. These passages make the meaning of the word quite clear. Propitiation was a means of forgiveness. To propitiate, was to shelter the sinner from the punishment due to his sin. In each case the propitiation was

provided and commanded by God. The O.T. use of the word recalls the sacrificial ritual of the Law of Moses: and the words **in His blood** place the blood shed on the cross of Christ in relation to that which was so conspicuous in the Mosaic ritual. In Homer's *Iliad* bk. i. 147, 386, 444, 472 and elsewhere in classic Greek, the word is used in the sense of deprecating the anger and regaining the favour of an offended deity, the name of the god being put in the accusative: similarly Gen. xxxii. 20, Prov. xvi. 14. But this construction and conception are not found, in reference to God, throughout the Bible. In the passage before us, as in 1 Jno. iv. 10, God Himself provides the propitiation.

In Heb. ix. 5, Ex. xxv. 17—22, the exact word used in Rom. iii. 25 denotes the mercy-seat, the place of propitiation. But to any comparison of Christ with the mercy-seat we have no reference throughout the New Testament. Moreover, the death of Christ is here mentioned as a demonstration, not of the mercy, but of the righteousness, of God. To call Him a mercy-seat, would add nothing to the meaning of this great statement of doctrine; whereas, to call Him a *propitiation*, connects His death with the ancient sacrifices; as in 1 Cor. v. 7, Eph. v. 2, 1 Pet. i. 19, Heb. ix. 26. It is therefore better to take the word to mean a *propitiatory* sacrifice, a means of atonement. In the ancient ritual, the blood of the sacrifice procured for the offerer forgiveness. God *set-forth* Christ conspicuously before the eyes of men to be a sacrifice by which they might escape from the punishment due to their sins. The word *propitiation* derives its force from the proof in DIV. I. that all men are exposed to punishment.

Through faith: means by which the propitiation becomes effective for each one. As each one believes, he goes from under the anger of God. God *set forth* Christ *in His own blood:* presented Him to the eyes of men covered with His own blood. This indicates wherein lay the *propitiatory* efficacy of this sacrifice. The above connection of thought is better than *faith in His blood:* for the phrase *faith in* (Eph. i. 15, 1 Tim. iii. 13, 2 Tim. i. 13, iii. 15) is not common with Paul: and we nowhere else find such an idea as faith in the blood of Christ. But the practical difference is not great: for justifying faith takes account of the death of Christ as the means of our pardon.

Since the validity of the propitiation in Christ was *in His blood*, i.e. in His violent death, His blood and life were the ransom price of our justification: so Eph. i. 7, Mt. xx. 28, 1 Pet. i. 18, 19, Rev. v. 9. For in all human language every costly means used

to obtain a result not otherwise possible is correctly called the price paid for it. Thus the word *propitiation* sheds light on the foregoing word *redemption*.

For demonstration of etc.: purpose for which God set forth Christ as a propitiation. **His righteousness**: as in *v.* 5: the divine attribute by which God impartially administers His own laws and will judge the world. This meaning, differing from that of the same phrase in *vv.* 21, 22, is required by the words *Himself righteous* in *v.* 26. Such administrative *righteousness*, we commonly call *justice*: but in Greek the words are the same.

Because of the passing over etc.: conduct of God in the past prompting Him now to give proof of His justice. *Passing-over*: not forgiveness, but apparent tolerance of sin shown in delay to inflict punishment. **The before-committed sins**: during the long ages of the past history of Israel. **In the forbearance of God**: as in ch. ii. 4: His holding back the due punishment of their sins: cp. Acts xvii. 30, xiv. 16. God gave proof (ch. i. 24—27) of His anger against sin by now and then inflicting punishment on the Gentiles and on Israel. But He did not inflict the full penalty: else the whole race would have perished. He did not forgive, but to a large extent He *passed over*, the sins of men. Now, for a king to overlook crime, to forbear to punish, or even to delay punishment, is unjust. And God's character was lowered in the eyes of some by His forbearance, which they misinterpreted to be an indication that they will escape punishment. God gave Christ to die *in order to demonstrate His justice* in view of a tolerance of past sins which seemed to obscure it.

26. **For the demonstration of His righteousness**: conspicuous and emphatic repetition of the same words in *v.* 25. **In the present season**: the days of Christ, who, as we read in ch. v. 6, "in due *season* died for ungodly ones," in contrast to God's forbearance in earlier ages. **In order that He etc.**: further and final purpose of this demonstration of God's justice, and of His gift of Christ to die. This purpose implies that, apart from the demonstration of God's justice in the death of Christ, God could not be at the same time **Himself just and a justifier of** those who put *faith* in *Jesus*. For certainly He would not have given His Son to die in order to reach an end which might have been reached at less cost. In other words, Paul here asserts that God gave Christ to die in order to harmonize with His own attribute of justice the justification of believers announced in the Gospel. **Faith of Jesus**: *belief of* the words of *Jesus*, as in *v.* 22. *Him*

that has *faith:* literally *him* whose position and character are derived *from* a *faith of* which *Jesus* is the personal Object: same phrase in *v.* 30, chs. i. 17, iv. 16, ix. 30, 32, x. 6, etc. These words keep before us Doctrine 1, asserted in *v.* 22.

Verse 26 is Paul's last and highest word about the death of Christ; and it is the fullest teaching in the New Testament, explaining all its other teaching on the same solemn subject. If the death of Christ was needful in order to demonstrate the justice of God in view of the justification of sinners announced in the Gospel and in view of His own past forbearance of sin, then Justice itself demanded this demonstration. For a ruler is bound not only to administer impartially his own laws but to make his impartiality manifest to all; because whatever obscures his justice defeats the ends of justice, and whatever manifests it aids those ends. Now, if God gave Christ to die in order to harmonize with His own justice the justification of believers, then was Christ's death absolutely necessary for man's salvation: for God could not possibly be unjust. Consequently, by the death of Christ was removed an absolute barrier to man's salvation having its foundation in the eternal nature of God.

The above teaching explains the word *redemption* in *v.* 24: for if, as we have just seen, man's salvation was impossible apart from some such demonstration of God's justice as is found in Christ's death, then was this last the price paid for our salvation. We need not ask, To whom paid? For the phrase is one of the most common and expressive of human metaphors. There was no bargaining with Satan, or between the Persons of the Godhead, but there was an infinite price paid. The word *propitiation* in *v.* 25 is also explained: for through the death of Christ believers are saved from the penalty of their sins which otherwise would have fallen on their own heads, just as in Egypt the firstborn was saved from death by the death of the Paschal lamb.

In *vv.* 24—26, Paul asserts, without proof, the SECOND FUNDAMENTAL DOCTRINE of this epistle, viz. that God gave Christ to die in order to harmonize with His own justice, and thus make possible, the justification of believers. The same doctrine He reasserts in ch. iv. 25, and draws from it important inferences in chs. v. 6—10, vi. 3—10, vii. 4, viii. 32—34, xiv. 9, 15: it is equally prominent in other epistles from his pen. The complete confidence with which he asserts and assumes it, without proof, leaves no room to doubt that this remarkable doctrine was actually taught and held by the apostle Paul and by the Christians among whom he moved,

That our life comes through Christ's death, is taught clearly in Heb. ix. 12—x. 19; 1 Pet. i. 18, ii. 24, iii. 18; 1 Jno. ii. 2, iv. 10; Rev. i. 5, v. 6—9, vii. 14. Similar teaching is attributed to Christ in each of the Four Gospels: Mt. xx. 28, xxvi. 28; Mk. x. 45, xiv. 24; Lk. xxii. 20; Jno. vi. 51, x. 11, xii. 24. That these numerous and various documents agree in teaching this remarkable doctrine, proves clearly that it was universally held by the first generation of the disciples of Jesus; and that it was actually taught by Him. For only thus can the agreement be accounted for.

This proof is greatly strengthened by the ordinance of the Lord's Supper. Wherever there are Christians, they celebrate His death by the most solemn act of their worship. The universality of this custom proves clearly that it dates from the origin of Christianity. Now, if the servants of Christ live because He died, we wonder not that they commemorate His death by a feast: and we wonder not that in the most solemn crisis of His life He commanded them to keep this commemorative feast, thus giving it a unique position as the one recurrent rite of His Church, and thus indicating His purpose to make it a channel of special blessing. But, of this rite, and of the importance attached to it by Christians everywhere, I can conceive no other explanation. It is thus an abiding witness to the doctrine before us. A similar though less definite witness is borne by the animal sacrifices so conspicuous in the Mosaic ritual and in the worship of the ancient world. In almost every nation men believed that in some cases the guilty could be saved only by the blood of an innocent victim. Whence this strange belief? If the teaching of Rom. iii. 24—26 be true, we can conceive that He who wrote His law in the hearts of all in some way taught men to offer animal sacrifices, in order that, by their evident insufficiency, they might proclaim the need of a nobler Victim.

On the whole subject, see Diss. vii. of my *Galatians*, on "The Cross of Christ;" and Part iii. of my *Through Christ to God*, on on "The Death of Christ."

Paul has now, after proving that all men are or have been under condemnation, asserted two great doctrines, viz. (1) that God receives into His favour all who believe the good news announced by Christ, and (2) that this salvation comes through the death of Christ, whom God gave to die in order to harmonize with His own justice the justification of those who put faith in Christ. Of these doctrines, the first is implied in, and the second is the only explanation of, teaching which can be traced by abundant and

decisive documentary evidence to the lips of Christ. We may therefore, apart from the apostolic authority of Paul, accept each of these doctrines with perfect confidence as a sure basis for further theological research.

REVIEW of § 10. Through the Gospel announced by Christ, God has, apart from obedience to law and from natural distinctions, manifested a righteousness which is His own gift to all believers. Such was needed: for all have sinned, and are thus destitute of the heritage of glory which belongs to the sons of God. This Gospel implies justification by God's free favour: and this is itself a proof of the moral failure of our race, a proof strengthened by the assertion of Paul that it was made possible only through the death of Christ. This last was therefore the ransom-price of our salvation. The payment was made, and the liberation takes place, in Him who was born at Bethlehem to be our King. Because no other means would avail, God set Him forth before the eyes of men, covered with His own blood, to be a propitiatory sacrifice sheltering from the punishment due to their sins those who believe. God did this in order thus to afford proof of His own righteousness, a proof made needful by His past forbearance and by His present purpose to proclaim pardon for those who believe the words of Jesus. To delay punishment, and still more to pardon the guilty, by mere prerogative, is unjust and therefore impossible to God. But that which by itself would have been unworthy of a righteous ruler, God has harmonized with His own absolute justice by the demonstration of it given in the death of Christ.

JUSTIFICATION. The word rendered in N.T. *justify* denotes *to make righteous*, but always in a forensic or subjective sense. In non-biblical Greek, it denotes to claim as a right, to judge right, or to treat with justice, sometimes in the sense of condemning and punishing. In the LXX. it is a technical term for a judge's sentence in a man's favour, in Dt. xxv. 1, Isa. v. 23; and of God the Judge of the world, in Ex. xxiii. 7, 1 Kgs. viii. 32, 2 Chr. vi. 23, Isa. l. 8. In Job xxxiii. 32, it denotes approval by a friend: and in 2 Sam. xv. 4, Ps. lxxxii. 3 it is a judges' righteous sentence, thus approaching from another side the classic use of the word. The only passage in the LXX. in which the word can possibly denote objective conformity to the Law is Isa. liii. 11; and its use elsewhere suggests that even here it means simply to procure for guilty men the acquittal of the great Judge.

In complete agreement with this use of the word in the LXX., is its use in the New Testament. From her works and her children has gone forth a declaration that Wisdom is in the right: Mt. xi. 19, Lk. vii. 35. We read in Lk. x. 29, xvi. 15 of men who *justified* themselves, in the sight of others and perhaps of themselves. Even the publicans, in Lk. vii. 29, "*justified* God," i.e. declared Him, by receiving Baptism, to be in the right in His severe words to them through the lips of John; in the sense in which the word is used in the quotation in Rom. iii. 4. In Mt. xii. 37, as in Rom. ii. 13, the word denotes a favourable sentence of God at the great assize; and refers in Jas. ii. 24, 25 to God's approbation of Abraham expressed in Gen. xxii. 16, and to His approbation of Rahab's faith as shown in her rescue amid the destruction of Jericho. Christ's words about the publican in Lk. xviii. 14 foreshadowed Paul's use of the word: for he "went down to his house *justified*." Throughout the Bible the word *justify* denotes, never impartation of inward righteousness, but always a reckoning or declaring or treating as righteous.

This constant use of the word, in close harmony with its somewhat different use in classic Greek, determines its meaning in Rom. iii. 20, 24, 26, 28, 30, iv. 5, v. 1, 9 and in Gal. ii. 16, 17, iii. 8, 24: and this determines the meaning of the equivalent word *righteousness* in Rom. i. 17, iii. 21, 22, ix. 30, x. 3, 4, 6. All these passages refer, not to actual conformity to the moral law, but to God's forgiving reception into His favour of those who put faith in Christ. And this is confirmed by the phrase "faith reckoned for righteousness" used in ch. iv. 3, 5, 9, 24 as an equivalent to "justified through faith." For the word *reckoned* is evidently forensic.

To the above meaning of the word it cannot be objected that a forensic righteousness without actual conformity to the moral law is worthless. For, as we shall see, justification through faith is followed by adoption into the family of God, and by the gift of the Spirit of Adoption to be the animating principle of a new life of devotion to God. But this all-important teaching is clothed in other phraseology. It is not suggested by the word now before us. See further in Diss. vi. of my *Galatians*.

Since we appear before God charged with sin, to us justification is acquittal. And, since we are actually guilty, it is practically pardon. But it is not looked upon as such: for, whereas pardon is a setting aside of law, justification is a carrying out of the new Law of Faith.

In the N.T., no writer except Paul uses the phrase "justified through faith." Notice therefore an all-important coincidence in Acts xiii. 38, 39, in a recorded address of Paul.

SECTION XI

ALL BOASTING IS NOW SHUT OUT

CH. III. 27—30

Where then is *the exultation? It has been shut out. Through what kind of law? Of works? No, but through a law of faith.* [28] *For we reckon that a man is justified by faith apart from works of law.* [29] *Or, of Jews only* is *He the God? Not also of Gentiles? Yes, also of Gentiles;* [30] *if, at least,* there is *one God who will justify circumcision by faith and uncircumcision through their faith.*

27. Where then etc.: question suggested by § 10, and bringing out a logical consequence of it. **The exultation**: the well-known exultation of ch. ii. 17, 23. That Paul refers specially to Jewish boasting, is evident from *vv.* 29, 30. But all human boasting is shut out by § 10: for its teaching rests on the truth that no man, by his own effort, can save himself. Paul looks round and cries, Where now is your exultation? It has vanished from view: **it has been shut out.** By what means? *By means of* a *law*, i.e. a divine proclamation of the way in which God will rule and judge His people? **What kind of law?** one which re-echoes the voice of Moses, Do this and live? **No.** God has shut out all boasting by promulgating a law which says, Believe and live. The Gospel is correctly called a *law:* for it is an authoritative declaration of God's will concerning us, and of the principles on which He will govern us. It is a **law of faith**: for it requires faith, and is thus distinguished from the Mosaic Law which required works. Important coincidences in Jno. vi. 29, 1 Jno. iii. 23. The word *law* reminds us that the voice of Christ is equal in authority to the voice from Sinai.

28. Restatement of Doctrine 1, taught in ch. iii. 21, 22; so put

as to be evidently a proof of the answer just given. The reading here is uncertain. The documentary evidence is about equally divided. All the Critical Editors prefer *for*, though Tregelles and Westcott express doubt, by putting *therefore* in their margin. The Revisers prefer *therefore*, putting *for* in the margin, as read by "many ancient authorities." This is therefore a case in which internal evidence may be allowed to decide. The reading *for* would make *v.* 28 a proof of *v.* 27; the reading *therefore* would make it an inference. Now this restatement of Paul's great doctrine cannot be an inference from a consequence of that doctrine, viz. that by it all boasting has been shut out: but it comes in appropriately as a restatement of the source from which the consequence flows. I therefore prefer the Editors' reading, **For we reckon etc.** The point of the proof here given lies in the sharp contrast of **faith** and **works of law,** which echoes a similar contrast in *vv.* 21, 22. The Gospel proclaims righteousness for all who believe it, without reference to previous obedience to law. Now the Gospel is an authoritative declaration of the will of God, and has therefore the force of law. By promulgating this new law, God has shut out all boasting on the ground of good works: for the new law implies that works cannot save.

29. Another ground of Jewish boasting. Do you exult in **God** as though He had nothing to do with any except **Jews?** Is He **not** the God **also of Gentiles? Yes, also of Gentiles:** Paul's answer, re-echoing his question.

30. A second restatement of Doctrine 1, in a form suited to overturn this second objection, strengthened by a great truth in which the Jews gloried, viz. the oneness of God. **Circumcision:** as in ch. ii. 26. It was a visible mark of the covenant on which rested the vain belief of the Jews that God was their God only. **By faith** (ch. i. 17) and **through** *faith* (ch. iii. 22) are practically the same. **Their faith:** that which the Gentiles evidently have. If there be **one God,** and if He **will justify** all on the same terms, then is He the God of both Jews and Gentiles. Notice here an important argument. The oneness of God is a proof that He is the God of all men: for a national god must be one among many. Thus a doctrine to which the Jews clung tenaciously supports the teaching of Paul and overthrows the exclusiveness of the Jews.

We here meet again the two objections dealt with in §§ 6 and 7, those based on the Law and on circumcision. Each is overturned by a restatement of Paul's great doctrine of Justification through faith, in forms suited to the objections they are designed to rebut.

In ch. ii. 13, Paul overturned the first objection by pointing to a principle which underlies all law. He now shows that the Gospel, which has authority equal to that of the ancient law, likewise overturns it. And He shows that the Gospel, read in the light of a truth which the Jews were ever ready to assert, overturns also the second objection.

That Paul mentions, as the first result of the Gospel, a matter so small as exclusion of Jewish boasting, may surprise us. But this boasting was probably the chief hindrance to the spread of the Gospel among the Jews. It lingered even among Jewish Christians: so Gal. iii. 2, iv. 21, v. 4. Paul wishes to show at once that it is utterly inconsistent with the Gospel. Moreover, that the Gospel shuts out all Jewish boasting, was to many a serious objection to it. So serious is this objection that Paul is compelled to meet it before he goes on to develop the spiritual results of the Gospel. By the reasoning of ch. iii. 27—30, he suggests the objection: in *v.* 31, he states it: and in ch. iv. he will entirely overturn it. Thus this section opens a way for the next.

SECTION XII

JUSTIFICATION THROUGH FAITH RECEIVES SUPPORT FROM THE CASE OF ABRAHAM

CHS. III. 31—IV. 17

Do we then make law of no effect through faith? Be it not so. Nay, we establish law. [1] *What then shall we say that Abraham has found, our forefather according to flesh?* [2] *For if by* (or *from*) *works Abraham was justified, he has a ground of exultation; but not in reference to God.* [3] *For what says the Scripture? "But Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him for righteousness."*

[4] *But to him that does work, the reward is not reckoned according to grace but according to debt:* [5] *but to him that does no work, but believes on Him that justifies the ungodly, his faith is reckoned*

for righteousness. [6] *According as also David describes the blessedness of the man to whom God reckons righteousness apart from works,* [7] "*Blessed* are *they whose lawlessnesses have been forgiven, and whose sins have been covered over.* [8] *A blessed man* is *he to whom* the *Lord will not reckon sin.*"

[9] *This pronouncing-blessed then, is it upon the circumcision, or also upon the uncircumcision? For we say that to Abraham was reckoned his faith for righteousness.* [10] *How then was it reckoned? While in circumcision, or in uncircumcision? Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision.* [11] *And he received a sign,* that *of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which* he had *in his uncircumcision; that he may be father of all that believe in uncircumcision, that to them also the righteousness may be reckoned;* [12] *and father of* the *circumcision, to them not of circumcision only, but also to them who walk in the steps of the faith in uncircumcision of our father Abraham.*

[13] *For not through law* was *the promise to Abraham or to his seed that he should be heir of* the *world, but through a righteousness of faith.* [14] *For if they of law are heirs, faith has been made vain, and the promise has been made of no effect.* [15] *For the Law works out anger: but where no law is, neither* is there *transgression.* [16] *Because of this,* it is *by faith, in order that* it may be *according to grace, in order that the promise may be sure to all the seed, not to that of the Law only but also to that of the faith of Abraham, who is father of us all*—[17] *according as it is written,* "*Because a father of many nations I have made thee*"—*before God whom he believed, who makes alive the dead ones, and calls the things which are not as though they were.*

31. A question suggested by the inference in *vv.* 29, 30 that justification through faith shuts out all boasting that God is in a special sense the God of the Jews. This assumption was based on the fact that to them only He gave the Law. Paul asks, Do we, by preaching a doctrine which ignores the distinction of Jew and Gentile, set aside the Law, which created that distinction? **Law**: in its usual sense, viz. the Old Testament, viewed in its general character as a declaration of God's will and as a standard of right

and wrong. There is nothing here, as there was in *v.* 21, to limit the word to the Pentateuch. **Of-no-effect**: as in ch. iii. 3; cp. Mt. xv. 6. It might seem that Paul, who preaches **faith** without reference to circumcision or previous obedience to law, denied the authority of the Old Testament. For there the favour of God depends on obedience to precepts, and circumcision is commanded as a sign of God's special covenant with Abraham's children. Now, to the Jews, the Old Testament was the authoritative standard of right and wrong. Does not the doctrine of justification through faith discredit, not only Jewish boasting, but those sacred books which were to the Jews the ground of moral obligation? If so, two bad results will follow. Paul's teaching will weaken, in those who receive it, the authority of the Scriptures, and thus weaken the moral obligations therein embodied; and the Gospel will be rejected by others whose conscience tells them that the voice of Sinai, which still speaks from the pages of the Old Testament, is the voice of God. Cp. Acts vi. 13. **We establish law**: by preaching faith as the condition of justification, we give additional proof of the divine authority of the sacred books.

So serious and so plausible is the above objection that we cannot conceive Paul, who is so careful to prove everything, meeting it by a mere assertion, viz. that contained in this verse. A full proof of this assertion, we shall find in his exposition, in ch. iv., of the faith of Abraham. Even the narratives of the O.T. are included in the Law: for they announce the principles of God's government. For another example of a narrative in Genesis quoted as *law*, see Gal. iv. 21.

IV. 1. What shall we say? what shall we infer? as in ch. iii. 5. If we defend the authority of the O.T., how shall we explain its teaching about **Abraham? Our forefather**: speaking as a Jew to Jews. **According to flesh**: in contrast to the spiritual fatherhood of *v.* 11.

2. Reason for introducing the case of Abraham. God's covenant with him proves that he found favour with God, and **was** in this sense **justified**. Now, **if** this justification was derived **from works, he has a ground-of-exultation**. This last word is cognate to, and recalls, those in chs. iii. 27 and ii. 17, 23. Paul proclaims a Gospel which shuts out all boasting; and he now introduces the case of Abraham in order to test by it the objection that, by overturning Jewish boasting, the Gospel overturns the ancient law. **But not in reference to God**: his exultation would be, not an exultation in God, like that in ch. v. 11, but something infinitely

inferior. If from works done in obedience to law Abraham had obtained the favour and covenant of God, God would be to him, not the free Giver of every good, but only a master who pays according to work done; and Abraham's confidence would rest upon, and his expectation be measured by, his own morality. Cp. Gal. vi. 4. The Gospel gives us that nobler joy which arises from confidence in God. This better exultation, a justification derived from works could not give, to Abraham or to us.

3. By introducing Abraham after saying that the Gospel confirms the Law, by admitting that justification from works would give him a boasting which Paul has proved that no man can have, and that it would deprive him of the only well-grounded exultation, Paul has implied clearly that Abraham's justification was derived from a source other than works. This he now proceeds to prove: **for what says the Scripture?** This last word denotes a single passage. The whole collection is called "Scriptures," as in ch. i. 2, xv. 4, xvi. 26.

Paul quotes Gen. xv. 6, perhaps the most important verse of the Old Testament. In chs. xii. 1, 7, xiii. 14, we read of God's promises to Abraham and of Abraham's conduct on receiving them; but from ch. xv. 3, 4 we learn that the promise had not been fully believed. In *v.* 5, God solemnly repeats it. And now, for the first time in the Bible, we are told the effect produced in man's heart by the word of God: "He **believed** in Jehovah," i.e. he was fully assured that God's promise of posterity as numerous as the stars will be fulfilled. See under *v.* 18. These words are the more conspicuous because of the purely outward character of nearly all Bible narratives. Equally remarkable are the words following. **Righteousness**: fulfilment of a condition, inward or outward, on which God is pleased to bestow blessing, spiritual or temporal: see under ch. i. 17. God **reckoned** Abraham's faith to be a fulfilment of the only condition required; and, because he believed, gave to him the blessing promised. God commanded him to offer sacrifice; and in that sacrifice again revealed Himself. "In the same day Jehovah made a covenant with Abram:" Gen. xv. 9, 18. Of that covenant, circumcision was afterwards appointed to be the sign: ch. xvii. 10. Thus Abraham's faith put him in a new relation to God. *Reckon:* as in ch. ii. 26, viii. 36, Gen. xxxi. 15, Prov. xvii. 28, etc. *Reckon for righteousness:* an important parallel in Ps. cvi. 31, which is a comment on Num. xxv. 10—13. God graciously *reckoned* the loyal act of Phineas as something which He will reward with an eternal priesthood. Similarly, in

Dt. xxiv. 13, He promised to reward the return of a pledged garment; and, in ch. vi. 25, general obedience to His commands. Same phrase in 1 Macc. ii. 52, expounding Gen. xxii. 16—18. Hence, in Jas. ii. 21, Abraham is said to have been justified by offering Isaac. The two phrases are practically equivalent. The reckoning may be spoken of as the mental act of God; and justification as the formal declaration of it.

Thus the Book of the Law declares that Abraham obtained the favour and covenant of God by belief of a promise. And, of that covenant, all the blessings which afterwards came to Israel were a result. Whatever distinguished the sacred nation from the rest of mankind, their deliverance from Egypt, the Law, the possession of Canaan, and the voice of the prophets, was given because of Abraham's faith: so Ex. ii. 24, Dt. ix. 5. The question in Rom. iv. 1 is answered. *Abraham found* justification through faith. Consequently, the preaching of faith is in unexpected harmony with the Old Testament; and thus confirms the divine authority of the Law.

Gen. xv. 6 is quoted also in Gal. iii. 6, Jas. ii. 23; and ten times in the works of Philo, an older Jewish contemporary of Paul.

The rest of § 12 expounds Gen. xv. 6. In *vv.* 4, 5, Paul will show that it implies justification apart from works, which in *vv.* 6—8 he will confirm from Ps. xxxii. 1, 2; and justification without circumcision, of which rite he will in *vv.* 9—12 explain the purpose. He will show in *vv.* 13—15 why the promise was given to Abraham apart from law; and (*vv.* 16, 17) on the simple condition of faith. He will thus show that the Law is in harmony, not only with the Gospel proclaimed in § 10, but with the levelling of Jew and Gentile which was to the Jews so serious an objection to it.

4, 5. Proof, from Gen. xv. 6, that Abraham was justified apart from works, and had therefore no ground of exultation. Verse 4 describes the case of one whose claim rests on works, and *v.* 5 that of another who has no works on which to base a claim. It is then evident that Abraham belongs, not to the former, but to the latter, class. Paul assumes that there is no merit in faith, that it does not lay God under the least obligation to reward us. Consequently, whatever follows faith comes, not by necessary moral sequence, but by the undeserved favour of God: so *v.* 16. Therefore, that Abraham obtained the covenant through faith, proves that he had done no **work** to merit so great reward. For we cannot give a man as a mark **grace**, i.e. undeserved favour,

what we already owe him as a **debt.** Consequently, the recorded faith of Abraham puts him apart from those who obtain blessing by good works. **The reward:** or pay for work done.

5. The opposite class, to which Abraham does belong. That a man's faith is reckoned for righteousness, and thus put in place of works, proves that he **does no** good **work** which fulfils the required condition. *Ungodly:* as in ch. i. 18. That Abraham was such, we need not infer: and his obedience to God's call proves his fear of God. Paul states a general principle, in a form which applies to his readers rather than to Abraham. He obtained by faith a numerous posterity, and through the promised seed a fulfilment of the earlier promise that in him should all families of the earth be blessed. The promise made to us is escape from the wrath of God, and eternal life. To make this dependent on faith, implies that all men are exposed to punishment: and to expect justification through faith is an acknowledgment of ungodliness, and a reliance **upon Him who justifies the ungodly.** By thus turning from Abraham to the sinner, Paul prepares a way for the quotation in the next verse.

Thus Gen. xv. 6, which asserts that Abraham was justified through faith, implies also that he was justified apart from works. Therefore he has no ground of self-exultation, but a good ground of exultation in view of God. Consequently, Paul, by proclaiming a new law which shuts out all boasting on the ground of works, does not overthrow, but supports, the authority of the Old Covenant and of the Jewish Scriptures.

6—8. A quotation from Ps. xxxii. 1, 2, in harmony with the foregoing. **David:** as in ch. xi. 9 from Ps. lxix. 22, 23. The name is found (Heb. and LXX.) in the heading of each Psalm. But to this we cannot give any critical value. Paul quotes the O.T. as he found it. See further in Diss. iii. **Blessedness:** the highest form of happiness, found only under the smile of God: so Mt. v. 3—11. This sacred sense is not absent in Acts xxvi. 2, 1 Cor. vii. 40. So Aristotle, *Nic. Ethics* bk. x. 8. 8: "To the gods, the whole of life is blessed; to men, so far as it is some likeness to divine activity:" cp. 1 Tim. i. 11, "the blessed God," vi. 15. *David* is quoted to support, not "faith reckoned for righteousness," but **righteousness apart from works.** Here we have a man guilty of acts of **lawlessness** and of **sins.** But they are **forgiven** and **covered-over:** cp. Jas. v. 20. To **reckon sin,** is practically to inflict punishment: so 2 Tim. iv. 16, 2 Cor. v. 19, Philem. 18. We have in Ps. xxxii. the joyful song of a pardoned man. Breaches

of law have been forgiven, and a veil cast over sins. Consequently, in the future God **will not** *reckon* the man a sinner. The **Lord**: see under ch. ix. 29. In *v.* 5, the Psalmist confesses his sin, and rejoices in forgiveness. He finds in God a refuge from trouble, and bids others rejoice in Him: *vv.* 7, 11. We have here a clear case of righteousness without works, of a man on whom, in spite of past sins, God smiles with forgiving grace. Thus the negative side of Paul's teaching is proved to be in harmony with the ancient Scriptures. Although Ps. xxxii. is not quoted in proof of justification through faith, we notice *v.* 10, "He that trusts in Jehovah, mercy shall compass him about."

Ps. xxxii. is quoted only in passing: and Paul returns at once to Gen. xv. 6. As the words quoted do not mention faith, they were probably not quoted to prove expressly that the preaching of faith supports the Law. But, as we learn from Rom. iii. 19, they have the authority of law. And, by supporting an inference following necessarily from justification through faith, viz. justification without works, they point to another harmony of the Law and the Gospel; and thus confirm the divine origin of both.

9—12. Further evidence, from the historic origin of circumcision, in support of the Gospel which announces righteousness apart from it, followed by an exposition of the purpose of the rite.

9, 10. This announcement-of-blessedness: in Ps. xxxii. 1, 2. Is it for **the circumcision** as such, or also for **the uncircumcision?** abstract for the concrete, as in chs. ii. 26, iii. 30. **For we say etc.**: reason for Paul's question, in which he takes his readers along with him, and for the tone of triumph in which he asks it. Paul and they have now learnt from Gen. xv. 6 that faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness. He asks, **How then was it reckoned? While in circumcision, or in uncircumcision?** To this last question, there is only one answer. For fourteen years, Abraham was in covenant with God before he was circumcised. Consequently, the rite is not needful for the validity of faith or for a covenant relation with God. All the distinguishing blessings of the Jewish race were a reward of the faith of an uncircumcised man. Paul's answer is an emphatic repetition of his own question.

11, 12. An explanation of the purpose of the rite, supplementing and strengthening the foregoing argument. **Sign of**: Mt. xxiv. 30, Lk. xi. 29. **Circumcision** was enjoined as a visible mark or token of the covenant of God with Abraham in the day when he believed: Gen. xvii. 11, xv. 18. **A seal**: a solemn and formal attestation of

that to which it is annexed. So 2 Cor. i. 22, Eph. i. 13, 2 Tim. ii. 19. Specially appropriate to circumcision, this being a visible and permanent attestation. The sign of the covenant, ordained by God in the day when Abraham believed, was a divinely-erected monument of the covenant and of the validity of faith even apart from circumcision. **That he may be etc.:** purpose of this sign and seal, viz. that the faith of Abraham, thus made prominent, may lead many others to a similar faith, and *that* thus *he may be* **father of** a great family of believers; and that **all who believe,** even without circumcision, may be able to call Abraham their father, and to claim the inheritance of sons. The meaning of *father* is explained by *heirs* in *v.* 14: cp. Gal. iii. 9, 29, also Gen. iv. 20, 21. **That to them also etc.:** further purpose of the rite. God's purpose was, by leading both Jews and Gentiles to a similar faith, to make them partakers of the righteousness which comes through faith. **Father of circumcision:** suggested by *also* in *v.* 11, which implies that God's purpose embraced others besides Gentiles. Even among those who bear in their bodies the sign of the covenant, Abraham was to have a spiritual posterity. But his true children are those only who imitate the faith of their father, which was earlier and nobler than circumcision. **Walk:** go along a line: so Gal. v. 25, vi. 16, Ph. iii. 16, Acts xxi. 24. Cp. Rom. vi. 4, viii. 4, xiii. 13, xiv. 15. Every act is a step forward in some direction. **Faith in uncircumcision:** emphatic repetition of the point of the argument in *vv.* 9—12.

13. Not through law; about which as little was said as about circumcision when God made the covenant with Abraham. **The promise:** as stated in Gen. xii. 1—3, 7, xv. 18, xxii. 17. In these passages nothing was said about *law*, in reference either **to Abraham or to his seed.** The fulfilment of the promise was not conditioned by obedience to a prescribed rule of conduct. **That he should be heir of the world:** the promise described, not in the form given to Abraham, but as we, taught by the Gospel, now understand it. Abraham's children, i.e. those who imitate his faith, will one day possess a new earth and heaven: and this, because given to his spiritual children, will be the reward of his faith. Of this greater gift, Canaan was but an earnest. It will be obtained, *not through law*, **but through a righteousness of faith,** i.e. a state which the judge approves and which comes through faith. On the historic independence of the promise to Abraham and the Mosaic Law, see Gal. iii. 17.

14, 15. Reason why the promise was given apart from law.

They of law: who make law their starting-point in seeking life, and whose claim is derived from law: so Gal. iii. 10; cp. Rom. ii. 8, iii. 26, Gal. iii. 7, 9. **Heirs**: who receive the blessing in virtue of their imitation of, and therefore spiritual descent from, Abraham. **Is-made-vain**, or *empty*: same word in 1 Cor. i. 17, ix. 15, Ph. ii. 7. **Made-of-no-effect**: as in ch. iii. 3, 31, Gal. iii. 17. These two words are practically equivalent. Of the statement in *v.* 14, *v.* 15 is a proof. **Works-out anger**: brings men under the anger of God. For none can obey **the Law** as it claims to be obeyed: and God is angry with all who disobey. **But where no law is**, there are no prescribed limits, and therefore no **transgression** or *overstepping* of limits: same word in chs. ii. 23, v. 14. Before the Law, there was sin, but it did not assume the form of transgression. If when God gave the promises He had annexed the Law as their condition, He would have made fulfilment impossible. For none can keep the Law as it needs to be kept. Therefore He said nothing about law. He thus winked at or passed over the sinfulness of those to whom He spoke; in view of the propitiation afterwards provided: cp. ch. iii. 25.

Notice here another summary of DIV. I. The causes which made justification from works impossible to us made it impossible to Abraham. The constant recurrence of this teaching reveals its importance in Paul's theology.

16. Because of this: viz. that the Law works out anger, and would if it were the condition of fulfilment make the promise without result. Therefore the inheritance is **by faith. According to grace**: God fixed faith as its condition **in order that** it might be in proportion, not to man's merit, but to God's undeserved favour. As in *v.* 4, Paul assumes that there is no merit in faith. **Sure**: a firm basis for confident reliance. God made *faith* the condition of the **promise**, in order that **all the seed**, not only Jews but Gentiles also, may have a firm ground for expectation of fulfilment, and this measured not by their works but by God's grace. Had obedience to law been its condition, they could have looked forward to nothing except His anger. **Who is father etc.**: actual fulfilment of the purpose stated in *v.* 11. **Of us all**: including Jews and Gentiles.

17. According as . . . I have made thee: a parenthesis asserting that the foregoing is in harmony with a promise of God to Abraham (Gen. xvii. 5) at the time of the change of his name. Israel was not **many nations** but one nation: and the sons of Hagar and Keturah were not heirs of the covenant. To what then

did this promise refer? To something important: for it was embodied in a change of name. The only adequate explanation of it is that it refers to Abraham's spiritual children. Jew and Greek, Englishman and German, call him to-day their father. Thus the Gospel again confirms the divine origin of the Law by affording an explanation and fulfilment of a prophecy therein contained and otherwise unexplained.

Before God etc.: completing the sentence interrupted by the parenthesis. Abraham stands before God **whom he believed, who,** as we shall see under *v.* 19, **makes alive the dead, and calls,** i.e. summons to His service and disposes of as He will, **the things which are not as though they were.** This description of God calls to our mind those elements of His nature on which Abraham's faith rested. Cp. Gen. xvii. 1: "I am God Almighty; walk before Me, and be thou perfect." God speaks to men and things not yet existing, and they come into being, and dispose themselves at His command. These words refer to the many nations whom, before they existed, God gave to Abraham to be his children. Before Him whose voice is heard and obeyed by nations unborn, to whom the decay of natural powers, even when amounting practically to death, was no obstacle, Abraham stood; and believed. And, because he believed, he stood in that day before God as the father of the whole family of believers of every nation and age.

REVIEW. We shall best understand this section by attempting to rebuild Paul's argument from the materials he used. In Gen. xii. 2, 7, xiii. 16, God promised to make of Abraham a great nation, to give to his children the land of Canaan, and to make them numerous as the dust of the earth. In obedience to God, Abraham left his fatherland. But in Gen. xv. 1—3 we find him in fear and unbelief. It is night; and there is darkness around and within. Although God has promised him a numerous posterity, Abraham speaks of a servant as his heir. God brings him out from the tent in which the lonely man nurses his loneliness, directs him away from the darkness around to the everlasting brightness above, and declares that his children shall be numerous as the stars. Abraham stands before Him who made the stars and calls them by their names, who is the Author of life, whom even death cannot withstand, who controls even men and things not yet existing. He hears the promise, believes it, and looks forward with confidence to his children unborn. His faith is recorded in the Book of the Law, where, in Gen. xv. 6, we read for the first time the effect upon the heart of man of the word of God. We also read that God accepted

Abraham's belief of the promise as a fulfilment of the divinely-appointed condition of fulfilment. In that hour he stood before God as father of unnumbered children. The words of Gen. xv. 6 are soon explained by the act of God. Sacrifices are slain; and in the presence of shed blood God makes "in that day" a covenant with Abraham. Of this covenant, the birth of Isaac, the deliverance from Egypt, the giving of the Law, the possession of Canaan, and all the distinctive privileges of Israel, were a fulfilment. We see then that the blessings of the Old Covenant were obtained by Abraham, for himself and for his children, by faith.

Again, since Abraham obtained the covenant by believing a promise, it is evident that he had performed no work of which it was a due reward; else it would have been given him as a debt. The words of Gen. xv. 6 remove him from those who earn something by work and put him among those who know that they are sinners and believe the word of Him who justifies the ungodly. Consequently, Abraham was justified without works. Therefore, though he may well exult in view of the grace of God, he can exult no more than we in view of his own works. Justification without works is also taught by David, who calls himself a sinner and rejoices in a pardoning God. Again, when Abraham believed, he was uncircumcised: and nothing was said about the rite till fourteen years after he received the covenant. Therefore, circumcision is not essential to the validity of faith, or to the favour and covenant of God. What then is the use of circumcision? It was a sign of God's covenant with Abraham: Gen. xvii. 11. And, since the covenant was obtained through faith, circumcision, the visible and divinely-ordained sign of it, was a solemn and public attestation by God that faith, even without circumcision, is sufficient to obtain the favour of God. In our days, God has announced justification for all men on the one condition of faith. Therefore, remembering that the Old Covenant was preparatory to the New, we cannot doubt that the rite of circumcision was ordained in order to call attention to Abraham's faith, and thus to lead his children to similar faith. And, since the Gospel proclaims salvation for Jew and Gentile alike, we cannot doubt that circumcision was delayed in order to teach the believing Gentiles of future ages that they may claim Abraham as their father and the righteousness of faith as their inheritance.

We are prepared for this levelling of Jew and Gentile by the fact that, at the time of Abraham's faith, as little was said about the Law as about circumcision. The reason is evident. If the promises had been conditional on obedience to law, they would have been

practically useless, and Abraham's faith an illusion. For neither he nor his children could keep the Law. The only result would have been disobedience and punishment. We therefore infer that nothing was said about law in order that sin, although existing, might not be a breach of the covenant; and that faith was chosen as its condition because God was minded to bestow the blessing as a gift of pure favour, and in order that believers, both Jews and Gentiles, might look forward with certainty to a fulfilment of the promise. In the Christian Church, we see fulfilled the purpose for which circumcision was ordained, and the promise that Abraham should be a father of many nations. He stands to-day in actual fact, as he stood then in the purpose and foresight of God, as the father of us all.

In § 11, Paul proved that the Gospel breaks down the barrier hitherto existing between Jew and Gentile. Now this barrier was erected by the Law. To break it down, seemed to be a denial of the divine origin and authority of those Sacred Books which were to Israel the ground of moral obligation. But now Paul has proved from these Books that the covenant which was to the Jews the source of all their distinctive privileges was obtained by Abraham through faith and apart from circumcision and from law. An inference from this, viz. justification without works, has been confirmed from another part of the Holy Scriptures. This unexpected harmony confirms both Law and Gospel, for it reveals their common source. Consequently, the Gospel, which by the resurrection of Christ is itself proved to be divine, affords proof of the divine origin of the Law. If therefore, after saying that the Gospel confirms the Law, we are asked what benefits Abraham obtained for himself and his descendants, our reply is, Justification through faith, without works and without circumcision.

In this section, Paul has touched one of the strongest internal proofs of the divine origin of the revelations recorded in the Bible, viz. the profound harmony which, amid a great variety of outward form, breathes through the whole.

SECTION XIII

DESCRIPTION OF ABRAHAM'S FAITH

CH. IV. 18—25

Who against hope believed in hope, in order that he might become father of many nations, according to the spoken word, "So shall be thy seed." [19] And, without being weakened in *faith, he considered his own body* as good as *dead, being about a hundred years old, and the death of the womb of Sarah. [20] But in view of the promise of God he did not doubt with unbelief, but was made strong by faith, giving glory to God, [21] and being fully assured that what He has promised He is able also to do. [22] For which cause it was also reckoned to him for righteousness. [23] Moreover, it was not written because of him only, that it was reckoned to him, [24] but also because of us, to whom it will be reckoned, to those that believe on Him that raised Jesus our Lord from* the *dead, [25] who was given up because of our trespasses and was raised because of our justification.*

In § 12, we learnt that Abraham obtained by faith the blessings of the Old Covenant. We saw him standing in the presence, and believing the word, of Him who makes the dead to live. Paul will now analyse Abraham's faith, and show that it is a model for ours.

18. *Hope:* in N.T., expectation of good; in classic Greek, expectation of good or ill, e.g. Thuc. i. 1. **Against hope . . . in hope:** literally *upon hope;* so chs. v. 2, viii. 20, Acts ii. 26, xxvi. 6. Abraham's faith was a reliance upon the future when, humanly speaking, the future promised nothing. **To the end that etc.:** purpose of this faith. That what follows was a result of it, is at once evident: for it led to the birth of Isaac and the fulfilment of the promises; and, by setting an example, it led thousands to exercise similar faith and to look back upon Abraham as their spiritual father. But it is needless to give to the preposition here used (εἰς τὸ κ.τ.λ.) any other than its ordinary sense of purpose: so in *v.* 11. For we cannot doubt that God led Abraham to believe in order to set an example to thousands who should afterwards walk in his steps. In the Bible, frequently a purpose far above their thought is attributed to the acts of men. This comes from a consciousness that nothing takes place without God's permission, and that nothing

is permitted except what will work out His purposes. Hence men's acts have a meaning the actors think not of. When Abraham trampled under foot the expectation of nature, resting upon the expectation of faith, he was by his faith working out the purpose of God, a purpose corresponding to the promise believed. Cp. Mt. ii. 15, 23.

The spoken word: spoken by God to Abraham. Contrast "as it is written" in *v.* 17.

19—21. A wonderful analysis of Abraham's faith and hope.

19. Negative aspect of his faith. The word *not* after **considered** is omitted in the four oldest MSS. and by all the Critical Editors; and is certainly spurious. It may have been put in by a copyist who thought it needful to make up the sense, and supposed that some earlier copyist had omitted it. The practical difference is not great. In the one case, we are told that Abraham did not take into account his advanced age; in the other, that he was unmoved by his consideration of it. In either case, he was unmoved by the fact of his old age. **Dead . . . death**: reproductive powers, in both Abraham and **Sarah,** being dead. **A hundred years old**: referring to Gen. xvii. 1; not to ch. xv. 6, when Abraham first believed God's promise of a numerous posterity. When Ishmael was born, Abraham looked upon him as the promised seed: ch. xvii. 18. But God tried his faith by declaring in *v.* 16 that the promised child should spring from Sarah. In *v.* 17, we see the effort of his faith to overcome this new difficulty; and we infer with certainty that his faith was again victorious. Belief of this last promise was all that God required; and the birth of Isaac soon followed. To this matured faith, Paul now refers.

20, 21. Positive description of Abraham's faith. He looked with unshaken faith, at his own aged body; but he looked also at **the promise of God.** That **doubt** is contrasted with faith, implies that God requires a faith which excludes doubt. So ch. xiv. 23, Mt. xxi. 21, Mk. xi. 23, Jas. i. 6. Had Abraham *doubted*, it would have been **with unbelief. Strong by faith**: able to break down obstacles: cp. Heb. xi. 33. **Giving glory etc.**: he recognised with admiration the grandeur of God. **Being fully assured etc.**: a description of Abraham's faith. Faith in a promise is a full assurance that the speaker will fulfil it. Here the fulfilment involved power greater than that of nature. Consequently, Abraham's assurance that God's word will come true implied an assurance that **He is able to** suspend the ordinary course of nature: for otherwise He cannot **do what He has promised,**

Notice here an emphatic repetition of the ground of Abraham's faith. Owing to the kind of *promise* believed, it was a reliance upon the power of God. Such reliance is the highest tribute of *glory* **to God**: contrast ch. i. 21. But faith is, here and everywhere, an assurance that God not only can, but actually will, perform His word. Abraham contemplated the natural impossibility of a child being born from himself and Sarah. But he fixed his eye on the promise of God and on the infinite grandeur and power of Him who had promised. This banished doubt and unbelief, and gave him the strength of faith. His faith was a reliance on the word and power of God.

22. For which cause: because he was fully assured etc. This may refer to Gen. xv. 6 or xvii. 15—23: cp. 1 Macc. ii. 52. Because Abraham's faith was what has just been described, God accepted it as the condition required for fulfilment of the promise. This prepares a way for *vv.* 23—25.

23, 24. Bearing upon us, of the story of Abraham. **It was not written because of him only,** i.e. to pay honour to him, **but also because of us,** i.e. for our good. By this assertion, Paul attributes to Genesis a purpose far above the thought of its human author; and therefore attributes the book, in some real sense, to one who foresaw the day of Christ. So chs. iii. 19, xv. 4, 1 Cor. ix. 10, x. 11, Gal. iii. 8. Of all this, the O.T. contains abundant evidence. For the far-reaching harmony underlying the Old and New Testaments, of which Rom. iv. is so wonderful an example, must have a common and superhuman source. And if, as Paul everywhere assumes, the Old Testament contains actual revelations from God to man, and these preparing a way for the supreme revelation in Christ, we cannot doubt that, in the providence of God, they were written down in order that the permanent records might help the faith of those who in later ages should put faith in Christ. In other words, we need not doubt that the benefits actually derived by Christians from the Old Testament were designed by God. And if so, the world-wide importance of the Gospel makes this the chief purpose for which the Jewish Scriptures were given. The future tense, **will be reckoned,** cannot refer to the judgment day: for justification will then be, not by faith, but, as we read in Rom. ii. 13, by works. And the word *us* forbids us to refer it exclusively or mainly to those who in time to come will be justified. It is best to suppose that Paul puts himself beside the writer of Genesis and looks forward to the Gospel as still future. Just so in ch. v. 14 "the coming One" refers to the incarnation of

Christ; and "we shall be," in ch. vi. 5, to our present Christian life. Similarly, in ch. vii. 14, Paul throws himself back into the days when he was under the Law; and in ch. viii. 30 throws himself forward and looks back upon his final glorification as already achieved. This sudden change of mental standpoint is a mark of the intense vividness of his thought. He ever identifies himself with that about which he writes. **Believe on**: as in *v.* 5. To believe a promise, is to lean *upon* him that gave it. **Him that raised Jesus**: on whose superhuman power both Abraham relied and we now rely. Just as to him belief of the promise was impossible without an assurance that God is able to set aside the decay of nature, so now we cannot believe Christ's promise of eternal life unless we are sure that God is able to open the gates of death. For, that God *raised Jesus* **from the dead**, is an essential element of the Gospel: so ch. x. 9, Acts xvii. 18, 31. That Abraham's faith had in view a miracle in the future, ours one in the past, does not mar the similarity. For, past or future, each involved the infinite power of God. This reference to the raising of Christ suggested the words *dead* and *make alive the dead* in *vv.* 19 and 17. The birth of Isaac was virtually a resurrection of the dead. Again, the resurrection of Christ, once believed, becomes a proof of the power of God, and therefore a pledge that He will fulfil all His promises: so Acts xvii. 31, Eph. i. 20, 1 Pet. i. 21. Hence, the description here of God whom we believe is parallel to that in *v.* 17 of Him whom Abraham believed.

25. Two great facts closely related, one to Doctrine 2. Justification through the Death of Christ, of which the significance will be expounded in ch. v. 1—11; and the other to Doctrine 1. Justification through Faith, which has just been illustrated by the faith of Abraham. Thus this verse is a bridge between chs. iv. and v. **Trespasses**: sins looked upon as a moral fall where we ought to have stood upright: cp. ch. xi. 11. **Given-up**: surrendered to a hostile power, as in chs. i. 24, 26, 28, viii. 32. **Because** we fell, Jesus was given over into the hands of His enemies that He might be a propitiation for our sins. And, just as our sins, taken in connection with God's purpose to save us, moved Him to give up Christ to die, so **our** need of **justification** moved Him to raise Christ from the dead: for without this proof of the divine mission of Christ there would have been no faith in Him and no justification through faith. So 1 Cor. xv. 17, 1 Pet. i. 3, 21; notice the want of faith in Lk. xxiv. 11, 21. God **raised** Christ from the grave in order to give to His disciples a firm foundation on which their faith may

rest securely as a means of *justification*. This last word will become the key-note of the next section.

The use of the same preposition (διά with accusative) with a past fact and a purpose touching the future need not surprise us. In each case it denotes, as always, a motive for action. When God resolved to justify, His own purpose became to Him a motive. Compare *The Nicene Creed*, "Because of us men and because of our salvation:" a very close parallel. The simplicity of this exposition renders needless Godet's suggestion that Paul refers to "a sentence of justification pronounced in favour of guilty humanity" in the resurrection of Christ. For of such collective *justification* Paul never speaks; and the reference of the word here is fixed by the word *justified* immediately following.

In this section, no reference is made to any similarity or connection between the promises believed by Abraham and by us. The comparison does not embrace the object-matter of faith, but only the mental act and the personal object, viz. the God of power whose word is in each case believed. The promises believed and the blessings obtained are altogether different. But the disposition of mind and heart is the same. The total difference between the two cases is a great advantage: for it compels us to look, not at one particular promise, but at a great underlying principle, viz. that every promise is fulfilled to those who believe it. God promises to us, and by faith we obtain, pardon and holiness and every grace. At the same time, the careful reader will observe that the promises to Abraham receive their complete fulfilment only in the fulfilment of the promises given to us; and that this fulfilment is brought about by the resurrection of Christ. The connection is referred to in Gal. iii. 16. Thus He is the centre towards which tends every step in the setting up of the Kingdom of God.

Sections 11—13 defend a point in § 10 specially liable to objection, viz. faith as the one condition of righteousness. § 11 provokes the objection, by showing that this condition overthrows all Jewish and human boasting. This is in complete harmony with the teaching of DIV. I. § 12 meets the objection by showing that faith was the condition on which were bestowed upon Abraham all the blessings of the Old Covenant. And § 13 teaches that his faith was similar to that required from us. The defence of faith as a condition of justification is now complete. The doctrine is assumed in the opening words of the next chapter; and then all mention of faith ceases till ch. ix. 30, when the harmony of the Old and New will again meet us.

FAITH and *belief* and the cognate verb *believe* represent the same Greek and Hebrew words. They denote mental rest in an idea, touching past, present, or future. The idea in which we are at rest is often mentioned as the object-matter of our belief. We say, I believe it, or I believe that it is so: cp. Rom. vi. 8, x. 9, Jno. ix. 18, xvi. 30, 1 Jno. v. 1, 5, Mk. xi. 23, 24; also Jno. xi. 26, 1 Jno. iv. 16, Acts xiii. 41. The assurance may arise from perception by the senses, as in Mt. xv. 32, Jno. xx. 8, 29; from testimony of others; from a course of reasoning, as in Rom. vi. 8; or from pure fancy. It may rest on good grounds, and correspond with reality; or on evidence altogether insufficient, and be, as in 2 Th. ii. 11, an utter delusion. Yet in all these cases, if the mind be at rest in an idea, we say, He believes it.

The most important beliefs are those which bear upon the future, and upon our own interests. Faith then assumes the form of expectation. We look forward, with an inward rest proportionate to the degree of our faith, to the realisation of that which we believe. Such beliefs call forth our strongest emotions, and frequently direct our actions. And only so far as objects and events are reflected in our belief do they influence our action.

The variety of the effects of belief arises, not from different kinds or sources of it, and not altogether from different degrees of confidence, but chiefly from variety of its object-matter. When we believe, we submit ourselves to be influenced by the object-matter of our belief. But our submission is voluntary: and each act which springs from faith is a fresh and free submission. For we may refuse, if we will, to act according to our convictions. But such refusal always tends to weaken and destroy the conviction trampled under foot.

A person is frequently introduced as the object of our belief. When we say, I believe him, we mean that our assurance arises from, and rests upon, the word and character of a speaker. In Jno. iv. 21, xiv. 11, Acts xxvii. 25, viii. 12, we have both the personal object and the object-matter of faith.

Justifying faith is "belief of Jesus Christ:" Rom. iii. 22, Gal. ii. 16. This can only mean belief of the word of Christ, a mental rest reposing on His promise of life eternal for all who believe. In 2 Th. ii. 13, we have "belief of the truth;" this last being the object-matter of saving faith. In Rom. iv. 5, 24, we have one who "believes on Him that justifies the ungodly," and "on Him that raised Jesus." Abraham's faith was an assurance, resting on the

power of God, that He will fulfil, in spite of natural impossibility, His promise of a numerous posterity.

In the O.T., e.g. Ps. xiii. 5, xxxii. 10, we very often find "trust in God," and much less often, e.g. Num. xiv. 11, Dt. i. 32, the phrase "believe in Him." In the N.T., we have very often the words *faith* and *believe*, with God and Christ as their personal object; and more seldom "trust in Him." The difference is significant. Trust is a confident expectation resting on a man's character, but not necessarily on a definite promise. Consequently, all saving *belief* in God is *trust:* for it is a reliance upon His character that He will fulfil His words. But it is often more than trust: it is a definite assurance resting upon, and corresponding with, a definite promise of God. To ancient Israel, God revealed Himself; and upon His revealed character His people rested their hopes of deliverance and prosperity. In our happier days, God has spoken in plain words His purposes of mercy for us; and upon His very words we lean and expect their exact fulfilment.

To denote a belief involving trust, the Hebrews used the phrase *believe in*, implying confident expectation touching the future conduct of the person believed in: so Gen. xv. 6, Ex. xiv. 31, xix. 9, Jer. xii. 6, Mic. vii. 5, Prov xxvi. 25, 1 Sam. xxvii. 12; contrast Gen. xlv. 26, Prov. xiv. 15. The phrase *believe in* (πιστεύειν εἰς) is a conspicuous feature of the Fourth Gospel, also 1 Jno. v. 10, 13; but is rare elsewhere: Mt. xviii. 6, Acts x. 43, xiv. 23, xix. 4, Rom. x. 14, Gal. ii. 16, Ph. i. 29, 1 Pet. i. 8: cp. Acts xx. 21, xxiv. 24, xxvi. 18. This rarity of the phrase is obscured by the Revisers' rendering of Mk. xi. 22, Acts iii. 16, Rom. iii. 22, 26, Gal. ii. 16, 20, iii. 22, Eph. iii. 12, Ph. iii. 9, Col. ii. 12. But we have no intelligible and correct English rendering of the phrase there used. Another phrase (πιστεύειν ἐν) is found in Mk. i. 15, Jno. iii. 15; cp. Eph. i. 15, Col. i. 4, 1 Tim. iii. 13, 2 Tim. i. 13, iii. 15.

Since saving faith is reliance upon God's known character, we may speak of *implicit* faith, viz. such estimate of His character as, apart from any particular promise, is prepared to accept with confidence and expectation whatever He says; and of *explicit* faith, viz. a definite assurance of the fulfilment of a definite promise. In the former sense, the phrase *believe in Him* is very common in the Fourth Gospel. But all faith in Christ has reference, direct or indirect, to His spoken word.

It is now evident that JUSTIFYING FAITH is an assurance, resting upon the word and character of God, that He now receives into His favour, according to His promise in Christ, us who here

and now accept that promise. And we have seen that this faith has a close parallel in the faith by which Abraham accepted, and obtained fulfilment of, God's promise to him of a numerous posterity through which blessing should come to all mankind. Under ch. vi. 11, we shall find another exercise of faith, laying hold of other promises, and followed by still more wonderful results.

So far I have spoken of faith without reference to the Holy Spirit. In so doing, I have imitated Paul, who up to this point has not mentioned the work of the Spirit. We have studied faith merely as a mental process. For the spiritual source of our assurance of the favour of God, see notes under ch. viii. 17.

SECTION XIV

A WELL-GROUNDED HOPE

CH. V. 1—11

Let us then, justified by faith, have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, [2] *through whom also we have been brought, by* our *faith, into this grace in which we stand; and we exult in hope of the glory of God.* [3] *And not only* so, *but we also exult in our afflictions; knowing that the affliction works out endurance;* [4] *and the endurance, proof; and the proof, hope.* [5] *And the hope does not put to shame: because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts, through the Holy Spirit, which* was *given to us.* [6] *For Christ, while we were still powerless, in due season died on behalf of ungodly ones.* [7] *For hardly on behalf of a righteous man will one die: for, on behalf of the good man, perhaps some one even dares to die.* [8] *But a proof of His own love to us God gives, that while we were still sinners Christ died on our behalf.* [9] *Much more then, having now been justified in His blood, we shall be saved through Him from the anger.* [10] *For if, while enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more*

having been reconciled we shall be saved by His life. 11 *And not only* reconciled, *but also exulting in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have already received the reconciliation.*

In ch. iii. 21—26, we learnt that God gives righteousness through faith to all who believe ; and that He gave Christ to die in order to make this gift of righteousness consistent with His own righteousness. In chs. iii. 27—iv. 25, we learnt that justification through faith, although it overthrows all Jewish boasting, is in harmony with God's treatment of Abraham. In ch. v. 1, Paul will assume that justification is through faith and through Christ, and will then go on to develop logically the results of these doctrines. We shall find (in *vv.* 1, 2) that they give us peace with God and a joyful hope of glory ; a hope (*vv.* 3, 4) not overthrown but confirmed by our present troubles, and resting on (*vv.* 5—11) the sure ground of the proved love of God.

1. Justified by faith: a summary of Doctrine 1, asserted in ch. iii. 21, 22 and defended in ch. iv. 1—24. *By faith:* as in ch. iii. 30. **Let us have peace**: a practical and logical consequence of being justified by faith.

Let-us-have peace was read probably by Tertullian at the close of the 2nd century ; and is found in all, or very nearly all, the Latin copies used throughout the Western Church. The same reading is repeatedly quoted and expounded by Origen and Chrysostom, who do not seem to have known the other reading ; and is found in all existing Greek copies earlier than the 9th century, and in some of the best cursives. The earliest trace of the reading *we-have peace* is in the Sinai MS., in a correction of the other reading made perhaps in the 4th century. In the Vatican MS. a similar correction was made, perhaps in the 6th century. Three of the later uncials and a majority of the Greek cursives read *we have peace.* So do the existing copies of the writings of three Greek Fathers of the 4th and 5th centuries. But the point in question does not affect their arguments. Therefore, as their works exist only in a few copies made after this reading had become common, we cannot be sure that it was actually adopted by these Fathers. No early version has it except the later Syriac, which exists here, I believe, only in one copy.

If we looked only at documentary evidence, we should at once decide that Paul wrote *let us have peace.* But some able expositors, e.g. Meyer, Godet, and Oltramare, have thought this

reading much less suited to the context than the weakly-supported reading *we have peace*. They say that exhortation would be out of place at the beginning of a calm exposition like that now before us; and that, since in *vv.* 9—11 Paul takes for granted that his readers are already reconciled, he would not now urge them to be at peace with God. They therefore suppose that, in very early times, the single letter which compels us to translate *let us have* crept as an error into some important copy, and thus led to what would in this case be an almost universal corruption of the verse.

This opinion is simple desperation. It requires us to believe, not only that all existing Greek copies earlier than the 9th century were made, directly or indirectly, from this one corrupted MS., but that copies of it were carried into both East and West, and that from them only were made all the Latin versions and MSS. and the four Eastern versions, and that copies of this corrupted MS. were the only copies known to the commentators Origen and Chrysostom. It is more easy to believe that the reading *we have peace* is a correction arising from inability to understand the other. Perhaps we have such a correction before our eyes in the Sinai MS. When once made, it would commend itself by its greater simplicity, and might be gradually adopted in the Greek Church as the ordinary reading. This would account for its presence in a majority of the later Greek copies, and for its absence from all the Latin copies and from the early Eastern versions.

The reading I have adopted was given by Lachmann in his margin, and is given without note by all later Critical Editors. It is given by the Revisers, with a remarkable marginal note saying that "Some authorities read *we have*." They render it, "Being therefore justified by faith, let us have peace with God." This rendering is in my view incorrect; and has been the cause of the rejection, by so many able expositors, of the reading found in all our best ancient copies.

It has generally been assumed that the words *justified by faith* imply that the readers are already justified, and make this a reason why they should *have peace with God*. But this interpretation is by no means the only one which the words admit or indeed suggest. The aorist participle implies only that peace with God must be preceded by justification by faith, and leaves the context to determine whether justification is looked upon as actual and as a reason for having peace with God, or as a means by which it must be obtained. This last is the use of the aorist participle in all the many passages in the N.T. in which it precedes a subjunctive or

imperative. Compare 1 Cor. vi. 15, Acts xv. 36, Eph. iv. 25; also Aristotle *Nicom. Ethics* bks. iii. 5. 23, vi. 3. 1. The same construction is found even with a future indicative in Rom. xv. 28, Acts xxiv. 25: contrast Rom. v. 9, 10.

This interpretation gives good sense here. The present subjunctive, *let us have peace*, denotes, not an entrance into, but an abiding state of *peace with God*, which Paul sets before his readers as their present privilege. The aorist participle preceding it implies that this abiding state must be preceded by the event of justification. In other words, this verse asserts that the doctrine of justification through faith, already stated and defended, puts within our reach an abiding state of peace with God.

The above exposition is required by the meaning of the phrases *justified by faith* and *peace with God*. For, as we have seen, to justify the guilty is to pardon: and every king is at peace with those whom he pardons. The justified are already, by the very meaning of the word, at peace with God; and remain so as long as they continue in a state of justification. To exhort such to *have peace with God*, as in the R.V., is mere tautology. This tautology is avoided in my exposition. For, though justification involves peace with God, the two phrases represent the same blessing in different aspects. Justification is a judge's declaration in a man's favour: the phrase *peace with God* reminds us that formerly there was ruinous war between us and God, and asserts that this war has ceased. It is our privilege to be henceforth at peace with God. The same idea is kept before us in *vv.* 10, 11, in the phrases "reconciled to God" and "received the reconciliation."

The only objection to this exposition is that in *vv.* 2, 9, 10, 11 and in ch. viii. 1 Paul speaks of his readers as already justified. To this objection, an answer is found in Paul's habit of writing from an ideal and rapidly-changing standpoint. In ch. iii. 7, he puts himself among liars, and asks "why am I also still judged as a sinner?" In chs. ii. 1, iii. 9, he leaves out of sight those saved by Christ, and writes as though all men were still sinning, and therefore under condemnation. In ch. iii. 21, 22, we hear a proclamation of pardon; and in ch. iv. its condition is discussed. As Paul describes Abraham's faith and justification, he declares that it was recorded in order to confirm beforehand the good news to be afterwards brought by Christ. As he stands by the writer of Genesis, he looks forward (*v.* 24) to the day when faith "will be reckoned for righteousness" to all who believe the

Gospel. A prospect of peace with God opens before him. While he contemplates it, the Gospel day dawns upon him. In this verse, he calls his readers to wake up to the brightness of its rising. What he bids them do, he conceives to be actually taking place in himself and in them. In *v.* 2, the sun has risen ; and we stand in the sunshine of God's favour.

If this exposition be correct, the subjunctive present, *let us have peace*, is rhetorical. Paul might have written, as so many later copies have given us his words, *we have peace*. But he prefers to urge his readers to appropriate the blessing about which he writes ; and immediately afterwards assumes that they are doing what he bids them. In other words, my rendering is much nearer to that of the Authorised Version than is that of the Revisers. It also permits us to translate in *vv.* 2, 3 *we exult* instead of the tame rendering in R.V. "let us rejoice."

Dr. Sanday in *The International Commentary*, if I rightly understand him, accepts my exposition. His paraphrase of *v.* 1 is, "We Christians ought to enter upon our privileges. By that strong and eager impulse with which we enroll ourselves as Christ's we may be accepted as righteous in the sight of God, and it becomes our duty to enjoy to the full the new state of peace with Him which we owe to our Lord Jesus the Messiah." In other words, he represents Paul as setting before his readers justification, which he has already expounded, as a gateway to peace with God. In his exposition, he correctly says, "The aor. part. δικαιωθέντες marks the initial moment of the state εἰρήνην ἔχωμεν. The declaration of 'not guilty,' which the sinner comes under by a heartfelt embracing of Christianity, at once does away with the state of hostility in which he had stood to God, and substitutes for it a state of peace which he has only to realise." Dr. Sanday acknowledges that my exposition "is perfectly tenable on the score of grammar ; and it is also true that justification necessarily involves peace with God." His only criticism is that my "argument goes too much upon the assumption that εἰρ. ἔχ. = 'obtain peace,' which we have seen to be erroneous." But this I have neither said nor suggested. These words denote only an abiding state of peace with God.

My exposition of the words *let us have peace* finds further support in *vv.* 2, 3, where I have rendered *and we exult*, a rendering accepted by Dr. Sanday : see my note.

Peace **with God**: not "peace from God" as in ch. i. 7, nor "the peace of God" as in Ph. iv. 7, but a new relation to God. Its

sudden introduction without explanation and the argument based upon it imply that it is involved in Paul's previous teaching. And this we see at once. Since all men have sinned, and God has threatened (ch. ii. 12) to destroy all who continue in sin, He is in a correct and awful sense the adversary and enemy of such. They are at war with God. Just so every good king is an uncompromising foe of all who break his laws. Although he loves his subjects and desires to be at peace with them, he lifts his arm to smite those that rebel: for by rebellion they injure themselves and others. Similarly in the O.T. we find God an active enemy of sin and in some sense of sinners: Ex. xvii. 16, Mal. i. 4, Ezek. xxxix. 1. In the great day, His anger and fury (ch. ii. 8) will burst forth against them. And not only is God against sinners but they are against Him: ch. viii. 7. For they are fighting the battle of Sin, His inveterate enemy: ch. vi. 13. They are thoughtlessly resisting His purposes of mercy for themselves and others. There are therefore two obstacles to peace between God and sinners, viz. their opposition to Him, and His justice which demands their punishment. Of these, the latter obstacle is the more serious. For, whereas our opposition to God arises from ignorance and therefore may be removed by divine teaching, God's purpose to punish sin is right and good, and cannot, as we saw under ch. iii. 26, be set aside except in conjunction with such manifestation of His justice as is given in the death of Christ. In this sense we are "reconciled to God through the death of His Son:" *v.* 10. It is now evident that justification is a declaration of peace between God and man. For pardon always implies that the king's officers will no longer pursue or detain the pardoned man, but if needful protect him. Consequently, justification involves *peace with God.*

These last words set before us another view of our position: for they remind us that in former days we had an adversary against whom resistance was useless, and fatal to ourselves. He was our adversary because we were bad and He is good. But now the conflict is past; and we can go into His presence without fear. Of this *peace with God*, the peace which God gives (ch. i. 7, Ph. iv. 7) is a result.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ: parallel to "through the redemption in Christ" in ch. iii. 24. These words are the keynote of the chapter. They are further expounded in *v.* 10: "through the death of His Son."

2. **Through whom also etc.:** through the agency of Christ we are not only saved from a disastrous war with God but *also*

brought into a position in which we enjoy the **grace** or smile of God, and therefore **stand** securely. We were far off from God's favour: ch. iii. 23. But Jesus took us by the hand and *brought* us near. Same word in Eph. ii. 18, cognate word in 1 Pet. iii. 18: close parallels. This access is **by faith**: keeping before us the condition of pardon. Had we not believed, we should still be far off. Since justification is a gift of God's undeserved favour (chs. iii. 24, iv. 4, 16), Christ, through whose death God's favour reached us, may be said to have brought us *into this grace*. Under His smile, conscious of His favour, *we stand*, i.e. we maintain our position in spite of burdens which would otherwise weigh us down and in face of foes who would otherwise drive us back. Same word in ch. xi. 20, 1 Cor. x. 12, xv. 1, 2 Cor. i. 24, Eph. vi. 11—14.

Exult: as in ch. ii. 17. Grammatically we may render either *and let-us-exult* or **and we**-*exult*. If we accept the above-given exposition of "let us have peace," we may accept here and in *v.* 3 the latter rendering. And this gives much better sense. To say that we actually exult in hope of glory and even in afflictions, is much more in harmony with the heroic confidence of Paul than is an exhortation to exult. **The glory of God**: the splendour in which God dwells and with which He will clothe His servants: chs. i. 23, viii. 17f, 21, 30, 1 Th. ii. 12, 2 Th. ii. 14. Notice the immediate consequences of justification, viz. peace with God, approach to God, the favour of God, a sure standing-ground, hope of the coming splendour, and exultation in view of it.

3, 4. Not only but also etc.: another exultation in addition to the above. **Afflictions**: same word as in ch. ii. 9, but in very different connection. Even the hardships which were so large a part of the outward life of the Roman Christians do not destroy but increase their exultant hope. This arises from **knowing** the effect of these hardships. They **work-out endurance**, i.e. they evoke and develop an heroic character which enables us to bear up and go forward under the burdens of life. Same word in ch. ii. 7. This **endurance**, since it is altogether beyond our power, affords **proof** that God is with us, and therefore that the Gospel we have believed is true. **Proof**: as in 2 Cor. ii. 9, viii. 2, ix. 13, xiii. 3. It denotes a good appearance after trial. This *proof* increases our **hope**: for it reveals the solidity of the foundation on which rests our expectation of the glory of heaven. Each link in this chain of cause and effect is essential. Our *afflictions* strengthen our *hope*, not directly, but by the *endurance* which they evoke. Our

endurance increases our *hope*, but only by giving *proof* of the strength of the arm on which we lean. But, apart from *the afflictions*, there would be no room for this *endurance* and this *proof*. Hence Paul says that each *works out* the other. As illustrations, compare Acts v. 41, 2 Cor. xii. 9, Ph. i. 28, Jas. i. 2—4.

Notice the certainty of victory expressed in the words *affliction works out endurance*. Of no other result, does Paul think. The faith which speaks thus is itself a pledge of victory. These words of Paul are true not only of all the trials of individuals but of the history of the Church as a whole. The endurance of others is a proof of what God will work in us if need be. Because of the courage which God gave them, we meet our foes, be they ever so strong, with a shout of victory.

The Revisers' rendering *let us rejoice* in *vv.* 2 and 3 seems to me much poorer than the A.V. rendering *we rejoice* which they have put in their margin. As we have seen, it is not required by the reading *let us have peace*, where the subjunctive mood is only rhetorical: and the two indicatives in *v.* 2, *we have had access* and *we stand*, suggest the rendering I have given. The rendering *exult* is better than *rejoice*, which should be reserved for another Greek verb.

Verses 3, 4 meet, and more than overturn, the objection that present trials are a counter-balance to the glory awaiting us. Our trials strengthen our hope, and thus increase our joy. The fury of the storm only reveals the strength of the rock on which God has placed our feet.

5. And our hope: which is not overthrown, but strengthened, by present trials. **Does not put to shame**: an abiding characteristic of it. Many a hope which has enabled a man bravely to battle with great difficulties has eventually by its failure covered him with ridicule. Paul asserts that this is not the case with the Christian hope. Of this assertion, *vv.* 5*b*—11 are a proof. Cp. Ps. xxii. 4, 5.

The love of God: expounded in *v.* 8 to be God's love to us. **Poured-out**: abundantly put within us, as in Acts ii. 17, x. 45. **In our hearts**: as in ch. i. 21, the seat of the understanding and the will. God's love is put within us as an object of our thought, and as a power evoking and moulding our emotions, purposes, actions: in other words, the knowledge that God loves us fills and rules us. These words appeal to our experience. Each will interpret them according as he has found God's love to be a living power within him. **The Holy Spirit**: now first mentioned, except the momentary

reference in ch. ii. 29. **Which** was **given to us**: to all the justified: otherwise Paul could not appeal to the love made known by the Spirit as a sure ground of the hope which immediately follows justification. Cp. ch. viii. 9. *In our hearts:* not *into*. The Spirit first Himself enters to be the soul of our soul, and then from within makes known to us God's love. That Paul makes no further reference to the Holy Spirit, implies that his argument rests upon God's love to us, not upon the fact that His love was revealed to us by the Spirit. The proof of God's love in *vv.* 6—8 rests simply on the historic fact of Christ's death. The reference to the Spirit is only casual. Paul cannot speak of God's love, on which rests our glorious hope, without a tribute of honour to the Spirit through whose agency God makes known His love. This passing reference is a precursor of important teaching in ch. viii.

6—8. Proof that God loves us: *v.* 6 appeals to the fact that Christ died for us, *v.* 7 compares this fact with the highest proofs of human love, and *v.* 8 deduces from this comparison a proof of Christ's love.

6. Christ: put prominently forward as Himself the great proof of God's love. **Powerless**: unable to save ourselves, either by atonement for the past or by future obedience. **In due season**: at the most suitable point of time: cp. Gal. iv. 4. This is in part evident even to us, and is an additional proof of God's love. **On-behalf-of**: ὑπέρ with gen.: it denotes benefit or help or service, and is thus distinguished from ἀντί (Mt. xx. 28), which means *instead of*. Cp. 2 Macc. vi. 28, vii. 9, viii. 21, "to die on behalf of the laws;" Ignatius to *The Romans* ch. iv., "to die on behalf of God." What the benefit is, must be inferred from the context. *Christ* **died** *on behalf of* **ungodly-ones**, i.e. in order that they may be saved: cp. ch. viii. 32, xiv. 15, etc. And since, had He not died, we must, He may be said as in Mt. xx. 28 to have died instead of us. *Ungodly:* as in ch. iv. 5.

7. Proof, by contrast with the most that man will do for man, of the greatness of the love implied in the foregoing statement. **Hardly,** or *scarcely:* an extreme supposition. **Righteous**: one whose conduct agrees with the Law. The above unlikely supposition is justified by a case which **perhaps** occurs. **Good**: beneficent, and therefore more than *righteous*. **The** *good* **man**: one whose conspicuous beneficence makes him a definite object of thought. **Dares**: suggesting the fearful reality of facing death, even for *the good man*. Notice the hesitation of these words as going almost beyond possibility, and the prominence given to the character of

the man for whom conceivably one might perhaps venture to die. All human experience tells how rare is the case here supposed.

8. Proof of God's **love for us** involved in what **Christ** has actually done on behalf of **sinners,** in contrast to the difficult suggestion of a man dying even for the good man. This event of the past is ever with us, and each day **gives-proof** of God's love. **Still** *sinners:* continuing in sin even while God was giving proof of His love to them.

9. Triumphant inference from the proof of God's love given in *vv.* 6—8, supporting the assertion in *v.* 5 that His love makes it impossible that our hope will put us to shame. **Much more:** not greater abundance, as in ch. xi. 12, but greater certainty, as in *vv.* 10, 15, 17. It is much more easy to believe that **we shall be saved** by Christ's *life* than that we have **been justified** by His death. To believe the latter, compels us to believe the former. **Now:** in contrast to days gone by. **In His blood:** recalling same words in ch. iii. 25: a vivid picture. The blood which flowed from His hands and feet purchased our pardon. *Shall be saved:* final deliverance from all evil: so chs. x. 10, xiii. 11, Ph. i. 19, 1 Th. v. 8, 2 Tim. ii. 10. This salvation has already begun and is progressing: so ch. viii. 24, Eph. ii. 5; 1 Cor. i. 18, 2 Cor. ii. 15. Paul here looks forward to its completion. **From the anger:** of God against sin: so chs. i. 18, ii. 5, 8, 1 Th. i. 10. From the past Paul draws an inference for the future. If God loves us so much as to pardon our sins at the cost of the blood of Christ, He will not leave the pardoned ones to perish in the day of judgment.

10. Fuller restatement of the above argument. **Enemies:** sinners (*v.* 8) exposed to God's righteous hostility to sin. So ch. xi. 28, Col. i. 21, Eph. ii. 16. **Reconciled:** brought into a peaceful relation **to God:** so 2 Cor. v. 18, 19, 20, Eph. ii. 16, Col. i. 20, 22. It is not merely or chiefly removal of our hostility to God, but our deliverance from His righteous hostility and anger against sin. This is God's work: hence **we-were-***reconciled.* For the meaning of this phrase, see Mt. v. 24, 1 Cor. vii. 11, 1 Sam. xxix. 4. It denotes here the removal, by means of Christ's **death,** of a barrier to peace with God having its foundation in the essential justice of God. **Of His Son:** the point of the argument. Christ's death proves God's love to us: for He is the Son of God. **We shall be saved:** repeating the argument of *v.* 9. **In His life:** by means of the power of the living and ascended Saviour, this looked upon as the environment of our salvation. What God has already done has cost the death of His Son. To complete our

deliverance, will require no fresh suffering; but will require only the living power of Christ. The costliness of the beginning is a pledge of the completion of the work. Similar argument in ch. viii. 32.

11. A supplementary argument supporting the confidence expressed in *v.* 10, and another exultation in addition to those in *vv.* 2, 3. **Not only** have we been reconciled **but** we are **exulting in God.** Cp. ch. ii. 17, 23. This recalls "exult in hope" in *v.* 2, and "exult in afflictions" in *v.* 3. **Through our Lord etc.**: recalling *v.* 1, and noting the completion of the argument there begun. Not only have we been reconciled to God through the death of His Son, but day by day we find in God matter of joyful confidence. **Through whom etc.**: emphatic repetition of the truth that our salvation in all its elements is through Christ. **Already**: or *now*, as in *v.* 9. The argument is this. Our present joyful confidence is itself a pledge that our hope of final salvation will be fulfilled. For it has its root in God and has been evoked in us by means of the coming and death and resurrection of Christ. Such a confidence, thus evoked, cannot deceive. It therefore confirms the proof of blessing to come already deduced from our reconciliation through the death of Christ.

The argument begun in *v.* 5*b* is now complete. God's love to us has been proved by the death of Christ for sinners compared with what man will do for the best of his fellows. And it has been shown that what God has already done for us at so great cost, and the confidence in God thus evoked, are a sure pledge that He will save us to the end. If so, we shall enter (*v.* 2) the glory of God; and our hope of glory, strengthened by endurance of so many hardships, will not put us to shame.

Notice the perfect confidence with which Paul assumes that all his readers, like himself, were once *sinners* and *enemies* of God; that they have been *justified* and *reconciled*, and are now at *peace with God;* and that they know this. For nothing less than a full assurance of the favour of God could prompt the joyful exultation which glows in every line of this section, an exultation not quenched but intensified by the hardships of life.

In *v.* 10, as in ch. i. 3, 4, we find the title *Son of God.* That *enemies* have been reconciled to God *through the death of His Son*, implies an infinite difference between Him and them, a difference based upon His relation to God as His Son. Moreover, Paul's appeal to the death of Christ as a proof of the love, not of Christ, but of God, reveals the peculiar closeness of Christ's relation

to God. For it suggests a father who gives up his own son, whom he loves with a peculiar affection, to rescue others who are not his sons. This implies that Christ's relation to God is altogether different from ours. This important doctrine, Paul assumes here, as in ch. i. 3, 4, without proof, except the historic proof afforded by His resurrection. See Diss. i. And on this great doctrine rests the whole argument of this section.

In ch. ii. 29, we felt for a moment the presence of the Spirit, as author of the circumcision of the heart. With this slight exception, the Holy Spirit and the love of God come before us now for the first time, and in the same verse. The connection is significant. The love of God, which is His inmost essence, is made known to us only by the inward presence of the Spirit of God. A knowledge of His love and the presence of the Spirit belong to the new life which in this chapter we have entered.

The love of God was manifested in the historic fact of the death of Christ; and is proved by Paul, from this fact, by human argument. Nevertheless, the assurance of God's love is produced in our hearts by the Holy Spirit. Notice here the true place and office and connection of the facts of Christianity, of human reasoning, and of the Holy Spirit. Upon the facts is built up a logical argument: into this argument the Spirit breathes life and power, and thus makes the facts real to us. Therefore, before Paul begins to reason about the facts he pays homage to the Spirit. But he is none the less careful to prove by conclusive reasoning the historic certainty on which rests the Christian hope. It is always dangerous to accept as the voice of the Spirit that which does not rest on historic fact and sound logic. See notes under ch. viii. 17.

Let us now analyse the spiritual life described in this section. Here are men once living in sin because forgetful of God. They were therefore looked upon by God as enemies; and were powerless to escape from, or make peace with, their great adversary. But God loved them: and, since their salvation was not otherwise possible, He gave His Son to die for them, and proclaimed through His death the justification of all who believe. They believed; and were justified, and thus reconciled to their adversary, and consequently are now at peace with God. Christ has brought them near to God. They know that they are justified, and that their justification is a gift of God's favour towards them. Conscious of this, they stand securely, and look forward with exultation to an entrance into the glory in which God dwells. It is true that their path is crowded with enemies who press heavily upon them: but in

spite of these they go forward. Each victory reveals the strength of the arm on which they lean. Thus each conflict increases their assurance of final victory: and the trials of life, of which they understand the purpose, call forth in them a song of triumph. When they believed, God gave His Spirit to dwell in their hearts: and the Spirit has made them conscious that God loves them. Their assurance of His love, though produced by the Spirit, rests upon outward evidence which can be tested by human reasoning. Their present position has cost the death of Christ, and is therefore a proof of God's love, and a pledge that God will not leave them to perish. Indeed, their exultation in God is itself a proof of this. Therefore, although their entire life rests upon a hope of the future, their position is secure. For their hope is one which puts no man to shame.

SECTION XV

THE CURSE OF ADAM IS REVERSED

CH. V. 12—19

Because of this, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and through sin death, and in this way to all men death passed through, inasmuch as all sinned—[13] *For until* the *Law sin was in* the *world. But sin is not reckoned while* there *is no law.* [14] *Nevertheless, death reigned as king from Adam until Moses, even over those who did not sin in the likeness of the transgression of Adam, who is a type of the Coming One.*

[15] *Nevertheless, not as the trespass, so also the gift of grace. For if, by the trespass of the one, the many died, much more did the grace of God and the free gift, in the grace of the one man Jesus Christ, abound for the many.* [16] *And not as through one having sinned,* is *the free gift. For on the one hand the judgment* came *by one for condemnation, but the gift of grace* came *by many*

trespasses for a decree of righteousness. [17] *For if by the trespass of the one death became king through the one, much more shall they who receive the abundance of the grace and of the free gift of righteousness reign in life as kings through the one, Jesus Christ.* [18] *Therefore, as through one trespass* a result came *for all men* tending *towards condemnation, so also through one decree of righteousness* a result came *for all men* tending *towards justification of life.* [19] *For, just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were constituted sinners, so also through the obedience of the one the many will be constituted righteous.*

12. Because of this: introducing a logical result of the fact, stated in *v.* 11, that through Christ we have been reconciled to God, viz. that in Christ we have a parallel to the estrangement of our race from God through Adam's sin. **Man**: a human being of any age or sex: cp. Jno. xvi. 21. From *v.* 14 (cp. 1 Cor. xv. 22) we learn that the **one** *man* was Adam: contrast Sirach xxv. 24, quoted below. Had not he sinned, death would not have gained a mastery over the whole race. **Sin**: personified as an active, ruling principle: so *v.* 21, vi. 12, 13, 17, 19. *Sin* **entered**: therefore before that time it was outside **the world**, i.e. the human race, the only part of the world capable of sin. In Gen. i. 31, we find a sinless world. These words suggest that Adam's sin was in some sense a cause of the many sins of his children: see note below. **And in this way**: through sin and through one man. **Passed through**: extended its dominion **to all men.** The death of each individual is a compulsory tribute to the sovereignty then usurped. **Inasmuch as all sinned**: a reason why through one man's sin death spread its sway over the entire race, thus expounding *in this way.* Paul says that when Adam sinned, *all sinned.* This cannot refer to their own personal sins: for, as will be proved in *v.* 13, these are not the cause of the universal reign of death. The meaning of these difficult words, Paul will further expound in *vv.* 18, 19.

Notice here a plain assertion that all men die because Adam sinned: so 1 Cor. xv. 22. This is also the easiest explanation of Jno. viii. 44. The same teaching may be fairly inferred from Gen. ii. 17, iii. 19, 22. But it is not elsewhere clearly taught in the Bible. We find it however in Wisdom ii. 23, "God created man for incorruptibility . . . but by envy of the devil death entered into the world;" and in Sir. xxv. 24, "Because of her we all die." These quotations, from different authors, prove that the teaching before us

was known among the Jews before the time of Christ. See further in note below on "Original Sin."

Verse 12 is incomplete: it states only one side of an important comparison. For, although grammatically the clause *also in this way etc.* might be taken as introducing the second member of the comparison, this would yield no adequate contrast. Evidently the comparison is broken off in order to prove the former side of it. The second side is informally introduced in *v.* 15; and the whole comparison is formally stated in *vv.* 18, 19. Similar broken constructions are found in Gal. ii. 6—9, Eph. ii. 1—5.

13, 14. Proof, from historic facts, of the doctrine stated in *v.* 12. That Paul interrupts his comparison in order to prove this first member of it, shows that it was not so generally accepted as to make proof needless. **Law:** the Law of Moses looked at in its abstract quality as a prescription of conduct: so ch. ii. 12. **Until** the *Law:* throughout the time preceding the giving of the Law: see *v.* 14. **Sin reckoned:** so ch. iv. 8. We have here a universal principle bearing upon the foregoing historic fact. It is true that during the whole period up to the time of Moses **sin was in** the **world.** But this will not account for the reign of death. For, although death is the penalty of sin, the penalty is not inflicted **while** there **is no law. Nevertheless, death reigned-as-king:** although there was no law prescribing such penalty. There *was sin . . . death reigned:* but the latter was not a result of the former, because the connecting link, *law*, was absent. **Likeness** (as in ch. i. 23) **of Adam's transgression:** their sin was not, like his, an overstepping of a marked-out line. These words leave room for any men **from Adam to Moses** who may have broken definite commands prescribing a penalty, and who therefore died because of their own sin. Paul reminds us that the reign of death was not limited to any such cases.

This argument is Paul's proof of the teaching in *v.* 12 that all men die because Adam sinned. It is true that all have sinned and that death is the penalty of sin prescribed to Adam in Paradise and afterwards in the Law given to Israel. But the universal reign of death long before Moses cannot be an infliction of the penalty threatened to him. It must therefore be an infliction on Adam's children of the penalty laid upon him (Gen. iii. 19) for his first transgression.

The above argument is not invalidated by the law written in the heart, by which, as we read in ch. ii. 14, 15, they who have not received the Mosaic Law will be judged and punished. For this

law belongs to the inner and unseen world, and in that unseen world its penalty will be inflicted. The punishment of bodily death belongs to the outer and visible world; and therefore cannot be inflicted in fulfilment of a law written only within.

A similar argument may be drawn from the death of infants. Upon them, though innocent of actual sin, the punishment of death is inflicted. This proves that they come into the world sharing the punishment, and therefore in effect the sin, of Adam. But it suited Paul better to use an argument which keeps the Law before his readers. The case of infants confirms the conclusion at which, by another path, Paul arrived.

Notice that to Paul death is essentially and always the penalty of sin. He sees men die; and inquires for whose sin the penalty is inflicted. His view is confirmed by the fact that both in Paradise and at Sinai God threatened to punish sin by death, and thus set it apart from all natural processes as a mark of His anger. See further in the note below.

Type: so ch. vi. 17: a Greek word denoting a mark made by the pressure of something hard. It is used in Jno. xx. 25 for a mark of nails; in Acts vii. 43 for a copy or imitation; and in *v.* 44, Heb. viii. 5 for a model or pattern to be imitated. Hence commonly for a pattern to be followed: 1 Cor. x. 6, 11, Ph. iii. 17, 1 Th. i. 7, 1 Tim. iv. 12, Tit. ii. 7, 1 Pet. v. 3. **The Coming One**: Christ, to whom, standing by Adam, Paul looks forward as still to come. After teaching that God put Adam in such relation to mankind that his sin brought death to all men, he now teaches that in this, in an inverse direction, Adam was a pattern of Christ. He thus introduces the second side of the comparison broken off at the end of *v.* 12. This second side will occupy *vv.* 15—19.

15. Nevertheless, not as etc.: although Adam is a type of Christ, the comparison between **the trespass** (see ch. iv. 25) of Adam and **the gift-of-grace** (see ch. i. 11) of Christ does not hold good in everything. Where it fails, Paul will explain in *v.* 16. But he has introduced a new word, *gift-of-grace*, and must explain and justify it before he proves the denial of which it is a part. This explanation occupies the rest of *v.* 15: it is also a partial statement of the other side of the comparison broken off in *v.* 12.

For if etc.: explanation of *the gift-of-grace* which Paul has just put beside *the trespass* of Adam. **By the trespass of the one, the many died**: a restatement of *v.* 12. **The free-gift**: explained in *v.* 17 as "*the free gift* of righteousness." It is a manifestation of **the grace of God**: cp. ch. iii. 24: "justified as a *free gift* by His

grace." God's favour and the gift of righteousness reached us **in the grace of the one man,** i.e. amid the favour shown to us by **Jesus Christ**. Cp. 2 Cor. viii. 9. **Abounded for:** as in ch. iii. 7: produced overflowing results in a definite direction, viz. *towards* **the many**. These last words denote a tendency, not necessarily an actual result. Nor does the indefinite term *the many* denote necessarily the same number of persons in each case: see under *v.* 19. The article implies only in each case a definite object of thought. **Much more:** greater certainty, as in *vv.* 9, 10. For here there can be no comparison in quantity. But considering God's character, it is *much more* easy to believe that the many are blessed than that the many die through one man. The former, Paul has proved: and his proof of it compels us to believe the latter. A similar kind of argument in *vv.* 9, 10.

16. Paul now adds to the surpassing comparison in *v.* 15*b* a restatement of the denial in *v.* 15*a*, i.e. of the one point in which the comparison does not hold good: **and not as etc.** The free gift through Christ differs from the death which came through Adam in that the latter was occasioned only by **one** *man* **having sinned:** i.e. by one man's sin. This denial is expounded and proved in *vv.* 16*b*, 17.

The judgment: the sentence pronounced in Paradise on Adam's sin. In consequence of **one** *man*, i.e. of his sin, this judgment became adverse, i.e. **condemnation.** These words look upon sin from a new point of view, viz. that of the judge who condemns it. This result followed from the action of *one* man! But **the gift-of-grace** follows, and undoes the effect of, **many trespasses,** and leads up to a **decree-of-righteousness,** i.e. acquittal, a direct contrast to *condemnation*. See under *v.* 18.

17. Practical result of the decree of acquittal just mentioned, prefaced by a restatement of the darker side of the comparison. **Death became king:** restatement of "the many died" in *v.* 15, in a form already adopted in *v.* 14. This reign of death was the punishment following the condemnation pronounced in Paradise. **The abundance of the grace and of the free gift of righteousness:** resuming and expounding similar words in *v.* 15. **They who receive etc.:** only to those who believe does the blessing which comes through Christ surpass the loss through Adam. Notice the emphatic repetition, keeping before us the point of comparison: **by the one** *man's* **trespass . . . through the one . . . through the one.** Also the tone of triumph. Through Adam's sin death became our king. His dread summons, we

are compelled to obey. But a day is coming when upon the throne now occupied by death ourselves **will** sit and **reign in** endless **life.**

That the numbers affected are not the same on both sides, does not mar the comparison: for Paul writes as a believer to believers. To them the gift through Christ outweighs the effect not only of Adam's sin but of their own (*v.* 16) *many trespasses.*

18. After the digression in *vv.* 13, 14, inserted to prove the former side of the great comparison in *v.* 12, and the second digression (*vv.* 15—17), in which he proves that the parallel does not hold good in all details, and also states the essential and glorious matter of the second side of the comparison, Paul comes now formally to state in *v.* 18 and to restate in *v.* 19 the whole comparison. The resumed thread is indicated by the phrase *for all men*, already used in *v.* 12 for the former side, now for the first time used for both sides, of the comparison.

Therefore: a logical summing up and inference, as in chs. vii. 3, 25, viii. 12, ix. 16, 18, xiv. 12, 19. **Through one trespass:** emphatic resumption of similar words in *vv.* 15, 17. **For all men:** resuming the same words in *v.* 12. **For condemnation:** resuming the same words in *v.* 16. **Decree-of-righteousness:** acquittal, as in *v.* 16, where its meaning is determined by its contrast to *condemnation.* In *v.* 16, this acquittal was mentioned as an outworking of God's grace: here it is a channel *through* which come *justification* and *life* eternal. It is best to take the word as denoting the Gospel announcement of pardon for all who believe, this being looked upon as a judicial decree and as pronounced once for all in Christ. **For all men:** a definite universal phrase which cannot denote less than the entire race, a meaning it must have in the former part of this verse. Same words, in same universal sense, in 1 Tim. ii. 1, 4, Tit. ii. 11. In Rom. xii. 17, 1 Cor. vii. 7, xv. 19, 2 Cor. iii. 2, the compass is less definite, but still universal. **Justification:** announcement of pardon, as in ch. iv. 25. **Of life:** result of justification. So *v.* 17.

The meaning of *v.* 18 is obscured by the absence of any verb in either clause. So *vv.* 15*a*, 16*a* and *b*. The verb here must be supplied from the foregoing argument. The verse reads literally, *Therefore, as through one trespass for all men, for condemnation, so also through one decree of righteousness for all men for justification of life.* The word εἰς, which I have rendered *for*, denotes tendency, whether of actual result or more frequently of purpose. In ch. vii. 10, we have both uses in one short verse:

the commandment was designed for life, but actually it resulted in death. The precise meaning in each case must be determined by the context. In *v.* 18*a*, we have an actual result: through one moral fall an influence has gone forth which has reached all men, and has resulted to all in condemnation to death. Through one proclamation of pardon has gone forth an influence designed for all men and leading to justification and life eternal. Over against a universal result, Paul sets a universal purpose to counteract that result. This universal purpose is all that his words grammatically mean, and all that his argument demands. When he speaks in the indicative future of actual results, as in *vv.* 17, 19, he does not use the definite term *all men.*

19. Summary of the reasons and explanations, as *v.* 18 summed up the conclusions, of *vv.* 12—17: *v.* 18 corresponds with "to all men death passed through;" *v.* 19, with "inasmuch as all sinned." **Constituted sinners**: made sharers of the punishment inflicted on Adam, and in this sense made sharers of his sin: a forensic reckoning. In a still deeper sense we have become sinners through Adam's sin: see note below. But of this deeper sense we have no hint here. **Obedience**: Christ's obedience to death, as in Ph. ii. 8. For in ch. iii. 24—26, of which ch. v. is a practical and experimental exposition, justification is attributed, not to Christ's obedient life, of which as yet in this epistle we have read nothing, but conspicuously to His death and blood. **Shall be constituted righteous**: faith reckoned for righteousness, as each one from time to time appropriates by faith the one decree of righteousness. The future tense as in ch. iv. 24, "us to whom it shall be reckoned:" cp. ch. v. 14, "the Coming One." This is better than to refer it to the great day: for believers are already accepted as righteous. Paul puts himself between Adam and Christ, and looks back to the sentence pronounced on the many because of Adam's sin and forward to the justification which in Gospel days will be announced to the many because of Christ's obedience to death.

The change from *all men* in *vv.* 12, 18 to **the many** in *vv.* 15, 19 cannot have been adopted merely to remind us of the large number of persons referred to. For this would be more forcefully done by the words *all men.* But Paul could not say that *all men* will be constituted righteous. For there are some of whom he writes with tears, in Ph. iii. 19, that their "end is destruction." And in *v.* 17 he limits his assertion to "those who will receive the abundance of the grace." That in the 2nd clause of *v.* 19 the phrase **the many** does not include so many as it does in the 1st clause, does not mar

the comparison. For the blessing is designed for all men, and will be actually received by all except those who reject it.

We will now build up Paul's argument from his own premises. God created man without sin, and gave him a law of which death was the penalty. Adam broke the law, and was condemned to die: and this sentence we find inflicted also upon his descendants. It is true that they are sinners: but, since no law prescribing death as penalty has been given to them, their death cannot be a punishment of their own sins. We therefore infer that the condemnation pronounced on Adam was designed for them, and that God treated them as in some sense sharers of his sin. In later days, another Man appears. He was obedient, even when obedience involved death. Through His death, pardon is proclaimed for all who believe: and through Him many enjoy God's favour and will reign in endless life. Since the Gospel offers salvation to all men and is designed for all, we have in it a parallel, in an opposite direction, to the condemnation pronounced in Paradise, and in Adam a pattern of Christ. But we have more than a parallel. We also have broken definite commands. For our own sins, we deserve to die: but through Christ we shall escape the result, not only of Adam's sin, but of our own many trespasses. Therefore to all men the blessing is equal to the curse: for it offers eternal life to all. To believers, it is infinitely greater.

Verse 18 implies clearly that God's purpose to save embraced all men. It therefore contradicts any theory which limits the efficacy of the Gospel by some secret purpose of God to withhold from some men the influences leading to repentance and faith which He brings to bear on others. The universality of these influences is implied, as we have seen, in ch. ii. 4. It is asserted or implied in ch. xiv. 15, 1 Cor. viii. 11, 1 Tim. ii. 4, iv. 10, Tit. ii. 11; Jno. iii. 16, vi. 51, xii. 47, i. 29, 1 Jno. iv. 14, ii. 2. Against these passages, there is nothing to set. For the more limited reference in Acts xx. 28, Eph. v. 25, Jno. x. 11, 15, xv. 13, xi. 52 is included in the wider; and is easily explained. Similarly, the still narrower references in 2 Cor. viii. 9, Gal. ii. 20. For they who accept salvation are in a special sense objects of Christ's love, even as compared with those who reject it. The entire N.T. assumes that the ruin of the wicked is due only to their rejection of a salvation designed for all.

In ch. v. 1—11, Doctrine 2, Justification through the Death of Christ, was expounded in its bearing on the individual: in *vv.* 12—19, it is expounded in its bearing on the race as a whole and

on our relation to the father of the race. In the reversal not only of the evils we have brought upon ourselves but of those resulting from a curse pronounced in the infancy of mankind, we see the importance and the triumph of the Gospel. Again, in ch. iv. Paul supported Doctrine 1, Justification through Faith, by pointing out its harmony with God's treatment of Abraham. He has now supported Doctrine 2 by pointing out its harmony with God's treatment of Adam; and has thus given a wonderful and unexpected confirmation both of the Gospel and of the story of Paradise. Lastly and chiefly, we here find in the Gospel a solution (the only conceivable solution) of what would otherwise be an inexplicable mystery. Independently of the Gospel, Paul has proved that all men suffer and die because of the sin of one who lived before they were born. This would be, if it were the whole case, inconsistent with every conception we can form of the justice of God. We now find that it is not the whole case. The pardon proclaimed through Christ for all who believe justifies the curse pronounced on all because of Adam's sin. Thus the dark shadow of death discloses a bright light shining beyond it.

Notice that Paul accepts the story of Paradise as embodying important truth. But, that he refers only to broad principles, leaves us uncertain whether he held the literal meaning of all its details.

ORIGINAL SIN. We have no indication that the word *death* in ch. v. 12—19 means anything except the death of the body. The argument rests on the story of Genesis; and there we have no hint of any death except (Gen. iii. 19) the return of dust to dust. The proof in Rom. v. 14 of the statement in *v.* 12 refers evidently to the visible reign of natural death. And the comparison of Adam and Christ requires no other meaning of the word. Through one man's sin, the race was condemned to go down into the grave: and through one man's obedience and one divine proclamation of pardon believers will obtain a life beyond the grave. The whole argument is but a development of 1 Cor. xv. 22.

Nor have we any direct reference to universal depravity as a result of Adam's sin. Had it been Paul's purpose to assert this result, this section would have been out of its place in the epistle. For as yet he has not referred explicitly to any moral change wrought in us by Christ. We may go further and say that the Bible nowhere teaches plainly and explicitly that in consequence of Adam's sin all men are born naturally prone to evil. That

this important doctrine may however be inferred with complete certainty from the teaching of this section read in the light of other teaching of Holy Scripture, I shall now endeavour to show.

In ch. ii. 1, 3, 5, Paul assumed that, apart from the Gospel, all men are committing sin. In spite of (ch. ii. 14, 26) occasional and fragmentary obedience, he has convicted (ch. iii. 9) both Jews and Greeks that they are all under sin. By works of law (*v.* 20) will no flesh be justified before Him: for (*v.* 23) all have sinned. Unless justified through faith, all men are (ch. v. 6—10) morally powerless godless, sinners, and enemies of God. All are or have been slaves of sin: ch. vi. 17, 19, 20. The awful reality of this bondage is described in ch. vii. 23, 24. It is closely connected with bodily life: for (ch. viii. 8) they that are in flesh cannot please God. All this implies an inborn and universal tendency to evil. And throughout the N.T. we find similar teaching.

We cannot conceive man to have been thus made by a righteous and loving Creator. And that everything that He made was very good, is asserted in Gen. i. 31. A change has taken place: we seek its cause.

In ch. vi. 16—22, we shall learn that to sin is to surrender ourselves to an evil power greater than our own, to be its slaves. This is plainly and solemnly asserted by Christ in Jno. viii. 34. Therefore, unless the sinner be rescued by one mightier than himself, his first trespass will inevitably be followed by a course of sin. If so, by his first sin Adam must have lost his moral balance, and fallen under the power of sin. And, since even the powers of evil are in God's hand, this inner result of sin must have been by His permission and ordinance. It was therefore a divinely-inflicted punishment. God decreed that the first act of disobedience should be followed by proneness to sin.

It is now evident that the consequences of Adam's sin were both outward and inward. God gave up his body to the worms, and (cp. ch. i. 24, 26, 28) his spirit, in some real measure, to the power of sin.

The former part of this penalty, we find inflicted on all Adam's children. This, Paul describes by saying, in *vv.* 12, 19, that in him they all sinned, and that through his disobedience many were constituted sinners. This suggests an original relation between him and them such that, in its physical consequence, his sin became theirs. It is equally certain that the latter part of the penalty is inflicted upon all. For we find that all men are actually, unless saved by Christ, slaves of sin. This cannot have been their

state as created. We can account for it only by supposing that they share not only the physical but the moral effect of their father's fall. By sin he sold himself into moral bondage: and because of his sin his children are born slaves to sin.

The above is confirmed by an important picture of universal sin in Eph. ii. 1—3, concluding with the words "and were by nature children of anger, as the rest." Paul here traces actual sins to an inborn tendency. Similarly in Jno. iii. 6 Christ traces the necessity for a new birth to the origin of our bodily life, "born from the flesh." In Ps. li. 5, Job xi. 12, xiv. 4, xv. 14, we have indications of an inborn defect of human nature. Since this defect cannot be attributed to the Creator, it must have another cause: and this cause lies open to our view in the fall of the first father of our race, from whom we inherit the corruption of death.

This inference is confirmed by all the facts of human heredity. Indisputably men inherit from their parents not only special physical weaknesses but special tendencies to various sins.

In this sense we may say that Adam's sin was reckoned or imputed to his children: not that God looks on them as though they were in any way responsible for it, but simply that the evils which God threatened should follow sin have fallen upon Adam's descendants, by the decree of God, because Adam sinned. About the state of men unsaved, see further at the close of § 22.

In Rom. v. 12—19, 1 Cor. xv. 22, Paul asserts plainly, following earlier Jewish writers, e.g. Wisdom ii. 23, Sirach xxv. 24, that the doom of death now resting on all men is a result of Adam's sin. On the other hand, modern Science leaves no room to doubt that animals died long ages before man appeared; and that the death of man is closely related to that of animals. This apparent contradiction demands careful consideration.

The statement that "through one man sin entered into the world" does not necessarily include the death of animals. For the term *the world* may fairly be limited to the human race, as in ch. iii. 6, "God will judge the world," and in *v.* 19, "all the world become guilty before God;" where all else except the human race lies outside the writer's thought. Consequently Paul's statement is not directly contradicted by the earlier death of animals.

The real question before us is, What would have happened if Adam had not sinned? This question Natural Science cannot answer. For the intelligence and moral sense of man cannot be accounted for by any forces observed working in animal life; and therefore reveal in him an element higher than everything in

animals and closely related to the unseen Creator of animals and men.* Moreover, each of these elements, the animal and the divine, claims to rule the entire life of man. Between them, capable of being influenced by either, is the mysterious self-determination of man. All this belongs to his original constitution.

In the inevitable conflict resulting from this dual constitution, man accepted as his lord the lower element of his nature. Like an animal, he ate attractive food, disregarding the divine prohibition. We need not wonder that by so doing he fell under the doom of death to which all animal life had long been subject. But we cannot doubt that man was absolutely free to yield submission to the higher, instead of the lower, side of his nature. And we have no proof whatever that, if he had done this, and thus claimed his affinity to God, he would have fallen under the doom of animals.

This possibility lies outside the range of Natural Science. This last reports that animals died long before man appeared, and that to their death the death of man is closely related. Beyond this it cannot go; except that it finds in man phenomena which cannot be accounted for by the forces observed in animals, thus revealing in him a higher life. It cannot therefore contradict the teaching of the great apostle.

This teaching is confirmed by the repulsiveness of the phenomena of death, a repulsiveness increasing as we ascend the scale of life. This repulsiveness suggests irresistibly that a world in which death is the doom of every living thing is not itself the consummation of the Creator's purpose. It compels us to look for a new earth and heaven not darkened by the shadow of death. Against this hope, Natural Science, which sees only things around, has nothing to say. The objection we are considering need not therefore deter us from accepting the doctrine before us.

We shall however do well to remember that this doctrine is taught in the N.T. only by Paul; and that it is not made, even by him, a fundamental truth on which other teaching is built. It is introduced only to show how far-reaching is the salvation announced by Christ; and therefore ought not to be quoted as one of the great doctrines of the Gospel.

* This is well argued, by a naturalist of the first rank, in Wallace's *Darwinism*, pp. 461—474.

SECTION XVI

THE PURPOSE OF THE LAW

CH. V. 20, 21

But a law entered beside, in order that the trespass might multiply. But where sin multiplied, grace abounded beyond measure; 21 in order that, just as sin became king in death, in this way also grace might become king, through righteousness, for eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

In § 15, we saw the bearing, each upon the other, of the two greatest events in the spiritual history of mankind, viz. the Fall and the Gospel. But Paul cannot overlook the third greatest event, the giving of the Law. He will now tell us the place and purpose of the Law in its relation to the other two events. This will teach us both its importance and its subordinate position: it was only a means to an end, but a divinely-chosen means to the noblest of all ends.

20. A law: the Mosaic Law, in its abstract character. God gave from Sinai a rule of conduct. **Entered-beside**, or *alongside:* coming in between sin and death, and the Gospel. **In order that etc.**: purpose of God in giving a rule of conduct. **The trespass**: Adam's disobedience, as in *v.* 15. **Multiply**, or *become-more:* in the "many trespasses" of *v.* 16. The express commands given at Sinai, following the one command given in Paradise, were followed by many acts of disobedience. If, as we have just seen, Adam's children inherited his fallen nature, these many trespasses were a result, and in this sense a multiplication, of his first trespass. Moreover, this was the only possible result of the gift of a divine law to a race born in sin. Paul therefore speaks of it as the designed result: *in order that etc.*

But where etc.: another and surpassing event. **Sin**: the abstract principle underlying *the* concrete *trespass.* It prepares a way for the personification of sin in *v.* 21. **Grace abounded-beyond-measure**: the favour of God produced results far surpassing those of *the* one *trespass.* As explained in *vv.* 15—17,

they were superabundant in reversing the effects not of one but of many trespasses, and in giving life to many, each of whom deserved death for his own transgression. The one act of disobedience was followed by many such acts: and thus the empire of sin extended its sway. But this multiplication of the trespass, instead of evoking a corresponding outburst of divine anger, called forth God's goodwill, in the form of saving mercy, in measure greater than the spread of the evil.

21. Purpose of this superabounding grace, and ultimate purpose of the Law. **Sin became-king**: so *vv.* 14, 17, "death became king." **In death**: the visible throne from which *sin* proclaims its tremendous power. Every corpse laid in the grave is a result of sin, and reveals its power. Moreover, sometimes men have committed sin for fear of death: cp. Heb. ii. 15. **Grace may-reign-asking**: the undeserved favour of God personified; as *death* and *sin* have been. God's purpose is that His own undeserved favour, with royal bounty, may rule and bless those who once were under the sway of sin and death. **Through righteousness**: recalling "the gift of righteousness," in *v.* 17. It is a necessary condition of **life eternal.** This last (see under ch. ii. 7) is the ultimate aim of God's favour towards us. So ch. vi. 22, 23. **Through Jesus Christ, our Lord**: the one channel of grace and righteousness and life eternal. It is a conspicuous feature of ch. v.: see *vv.* 1, 11, 17: cp. chs. i. 5, 8, iii. 24; 1 Cor. viii. 6, 2 Cor. v. 18.

The purpose of the Law as here stated supplements and explains that stated in ch. iii. 19. The Law commends itself to our moral sense as right; and, by bidding us do something beyond our power, it inevitably produces a consciousness of guilt, and leads up to further disobedience. All this was foreseen and designed by God as a means to a further end, viz. pardon and life. So Gal. iii. 23, 24.

The above teaching about the Law of Moses is in part true of the law written in the heart. Had there been in Adam's children no inborn moral sense, his moral fall would not have produced the far-reaching and terrible results we now see. By erecting in every man this barrier against sin, God has revealed the mighty power of sin which breaks down the barrier, and the terrible moral consequences of Adam's fall. But to this inner law there is no reference here.

DIVISION II. is now complete. The whole of it is a logical development of two great doctrines asserted in ch. iii. 21—26. In

chs. iii. 27—iv. 25, Paul shows that Doct. 1, Justification through Faith, shuts out all self-exultation, but is in harmony with God's treatment of Abraham: in ch. v., he develops Doct. 2, Justification through the Death of Christ, and shows that it gives us a well-grounded exultation in hope of glory, and is in harmony with, and is the only conceivable explanation of, God's dealings with mankind in Adam.

The complete confidence with which Paul accepts the facts and utterances of Genesis and uses them to defend the great doctrines of the Gospel proves that in the days of the apostles the substantial truth of Genesis was admitted by Jews and Christians. See further is Diss. iii. If we accept the great doctrines asserted and assumed in ch. iii. 21—26, and the truth of Genesis, Paul's reasoning will compel us to accept the teaching of the whole division.

DIV. II., like DIV. I., concludes with an exposition of the purpose of the Law. The difference between the two expositions marks the progress we have made. DIV. I. left us trembling beneath the shadow of Sinai, silent and guilty. But we have just learnt that the thunders of the Law are a voice of mercy, designed to lead us to Christ and thus to eternal life. DIV. I. made us conscious of our guilt: DIV. II. has reconciled us to God, brought us under His smile, and opened before our eyes a prospect of eternal glory. But as yet we have heard nothing about an inward moral change. This will be the lesson of the great division before whose portal we now stand.

DIVISION III

THE NEW LIFE IN CHRIST

CHS. VI.—VIII

SECTION XVII

IN THE DEATH OF CHRIST WE DIED TO SIN

CH. VI. 1—10

What then shall we say? Let us continue in *sin, in order that grace may multiply?* [2] *Be it not so. We who died to sin, how shall we still live in it?* [3] *Or, are ye ignorant that so many of us as were baptized for Christ were baptized for His death?* [4] *We were buried therefore with Him through* this *baptism for death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from* the *dead through the glory of the Father, so we also may walk in newness of life.* [5] *For if we have become united in growth* in *the likeness of His death, we shall on the other hand* be so in that *of His resurrection also;* [6] *knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, in order that the body of sin may be made of no effect, that we may no longer be servants to sin.* [7] *For he that has died is justified from sin.* [8] *But if we died with Christ we believe that we shall also live with Him;* [9] *knowing that Christ, raised from* the *dead, dies no more: of Him, death is no longer lord.* [10] *For* the death *He died, He died to sin, once: but* the life *He lives, He lives for God.*

On entering ch. vi., we are at once conscious of a complete change of tone and feeling, a change more remarkable than that in ch. iii. 21, because not accounted for by the altered position and prospects of the persons referred to. Justification, the great feature of DIV. II., meets us no more: other ideas take its place. We have entered another court of this wing of the temple of truth. DIV. I. revealed to us the anger of God against all sin: DIV. II. has now revealed deliverance from this anger, and restoration to

His favour. DIV. III. will reveal deliverance from the power of sin, and a new life free from sin. The one teaches what we receive through Christ; the other, what we are in Christ. The order is significant: first reconciliation to God, then rescue from the power of sin. In ch. vi., we have the new life in its relation to sin and to God; in. ch. vii., in its relation to the Law; in ch. viii., in its relation to the Holy Spirit. DIV. II. was a logical development of the two great doctrines stated in ch. iii. 21—26; in DIV. III., we shall find other fundamental doctrines, from which will be derived results of an altogether different kind.

1. What then shall we say? as in chs. iii. 5, iv. 1. Shall we infer from ch. v. 20, 21 that we may accomplish God's purposes by adding to the number of our sins in order that they may show forth the superabundant favour of God? The connection of thought is kept up by the words **grace** and **multiply**. What Paul here suggests was the actual result of his own early hostility to the Gospel: 1 Tim. i. 14.

2. An emphatic denial, supported by two questions introducing a new and important topic. Thus the questions in *v.* 1 are stepping-stones to the new teaching in DIV. III., and show that it guards from immoral perversion the teaching of DIV. II. We must not *continue* in *sin*, because (*vv.* 1—10) God's purpose is that we be dead to sin and living for God, and because (*vv.* 15—23) sin is obedience to a master whose purpose is death. **Died to sin:** separated from it, as a dead man is completely separated from the environment in which he lived: same phrase in *vv.* 10, 11, Gal. ii. 19, vi. 14; cp. Col. ii. 20, "died with Christ from the rudiments of the world." Paul assumes that we are in some sense *dead to sin*. If he can prove this, he will compel us, by the very meaning of his words, to admit that in the same sense we can no longer **live in it.**

3. Another question introducing, as something which the readers ought to know, a proof that we are dead to sin. **Baptized:** the formal and visible gate into the Christian life. Since Paul has not yet spoken of salvation except through faith, we must understand him to refer here to the baptism of believers: so Gal. iii. 27, Col. ii. 12. It was a conspicuous mode of confession, which, together with faith, is a condition of salvation: cp. ch. x. 9. **For:** see under ch. i. 1. **Baptized for:** as in Gal. iii. 27, Mt. xxviii. 19, Acts viii. 16, xix. 5; 1 Cor. x. 2, i. 13, 15; Mt. iii. 11, Mk. i. 4. It means that baptism is designed to place the baptized in a new relation to the object named; but does not say exactly what the

relation is. We shall learn in *v.* 5 that this new relation is an inward and spiritual contact with **Christ** which makes the baptized sharers of His life and moral nature: cp. 1 Cor. vi. 17, Gal. iii. 27.

That God designs the justified to be thus united to Christ, Paul further expounds in *vv.* 4—10, by calling attention to those elements in Him which we are to share.

For His death: more exact statement of the new relation to Christ to which baptism has special reference. This recalls Doctrine 2, stated in chs. iii. 25, iv. 25, v. 9, 10. Paul thus approaches his proof that his readers have *died to sin.*

4. Inference from *v.* 3. **Buried-with Him:** so Col. ii. 11. If baptism was a **baptism for death,** i.e. if it symbolized a union with Christ in His death, it was the funeral service of the old life; a formal announcement that the baptized were dead, and a visible removal of them from the world, Jewish or heathen, in which they formerly lived.

From the earliest sub-apostolic writings, we learn that immersion was the usual form of baptism. So Epistle of Barnabas ch. xi.: "We go down into the water full of sins and defilement; and we go up bearing fruit in the heart." To this, probably, Paul here refers. Even the form of their admission to the Church sets forth a spiritual burial and resurrection. But this is a mere allusion: and the argument is complete without it. The hour of his readers' baptism, in which they ranged themselves formally in the ranks of the persecuted followers of Christ, was no doubt indelibly printed in their memory. Paul here teaches them the significance and purpose of that rite, and the nature of the new life they then formally entered.

That immersion was not the only valid mode of baptism, we learn from *The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles* ch. vii., where, in reference to baptism, the writer bids, if water be not abundant, to "pour water three times on the head, in the name of Father and Son and Holy Spirit."

In order that etc.: further purpose to be accomplished by our union with Christ. **Christ** not only died but **was raised from the dead,** among whom He lay. **Through the glory of the Father:** amid an outshining of the splendour of God manifested in Christ's rescue from the grave. **Just as** *Christ* **etc.:** in harmony with the historic fact that Christ's death was followed by a glorious resurrection, God's purpose is that **we also** as well as Christ henceforth live a resurrection *life.* Of this life, *newness* (see ch. vii. 6) is a conspicuous feature. For the change is so complete that in Christ the old things have passed away

or rather are become new: 2 Cor. v. 17. And, since life is movement, **in** this **newness of life** God designs us to **walk**. This last is a favourite metaphor of Paul: ch. viii. 4, xiii. 13, xiv. 15, Eph. ii. 2, 10, etc.; also Jno. viii. 12, xii. 35, 1 Jno. ii. 6.

5. Proof that our burial with Christ was designed to lead to a life altogether new. **If**: argumentative, as in *v.* 8, ch. v. 10, etc. **United-in-growth**: literally *growing-together*, so that our development corresponds with, and is an organic outflow of, His. **Likeness**: as chs. i. 23, v. 14. By union with Him, we undergo a death *like* His. **On the other hand**: ἀλλά: a strong adversative particle indicating that the second clause utterly overpowers the first. Same word in chs. iii. 31, v. 14, viii. 37. "It is true that we suffer a death like His: but this we need not regret; for from it we infer that we shall share a resurrection like His." **We shall be**: probably a rhetorical or logical future. For believers are already living a resurrection life. Same use of the future in *v.* 8, where the argument of this verse is repeated, after an exposition of the former part of it: cp. ch. iv. 24, v. 14, 19.

6. Collateral explanation of our union with Christ in His death, followed by a statement of its purpose. **Our old man**: so Eph. iv. 22, Col. iii. 9: our old self. So complete is the change that Paul says that *the man* himself is dead. **Crucified-together-with**: so Gal. ii. 20, Mt. xxvii. 44, Mk. xv. 32, Jno. xix. 32: shared with Christ His death on the cross. In what aspect of His death we are to be sharers with Him, we shall learn in *v.* 10: how we are to become such, we shall learn in *v.* 11. Paul here asserts that on the cross of Christ not only His life on earth but our own former selves came to an end. **In order that etc.**: purpose of this union with Christ in His death. **The body of sin**: the sinner's own body in which (see *vv.* 12, 13) sin has set up its royal throne, whose desires he obeys, and whose members he presents to sin as instruments of unrighteousness. See also ch. vii. 5, 23. The importance of the body in Paul's theology and the subsequent argument here permit no other interpretation. **Made-of-no-effect**: as in chs. iii. 3, iv. 14. In former times the indolence, appetites, necessities, and dangers of the body ruled us with an influence we could not resist; and led us into sin. It thus became a *body of sin*. But, now that our old self has been nailed to the cross of Christ, our body has lost its adverse power. **No longer servants** (or *slaves*: see ch. i. 1) **to sin**: purpose of this destruction of the power of the body, and ultimate aim of our crucifixion with Christ. In explanation of the words *grown-together with the*

likeness of His death in *v.* 5, Paul says that we have shared the death of Christ on the cross, in order that our bodies, hitherto organs of sin, may lose their control over us, and in order that thus we may escape from our former bondage to sin.

7. Explains the foregoing ultimate purpose of our crucifixion with Christ. **He that has died,** or, as we should say, *is dead:* the believer, whom Paul looks upon as not merely dying but *dead* on the cross. His former life has actually come to an end. **Justified:** proclaimed by law free **from sin,** this being looked at as an adversary at law claiming rights over us. The word thus returns to its simplest meaning, in O.T. and N.T., of judgment in a man's favour. Cp. Sirach xxvi. 29: "With difficulty will a merchant be saved from wrong-doing: and a huckster will not be *justified from sin*." Over a criminal who has been put to death, the law has no further claim. And Paul here argues that in Christ's death we are dead, and therefore legally free from the master to whose power, for our sins, we were justly surrendered.

8—10. Proof of the latter part, as *vv.* 6, 7 proved the former part, of *v.* 5. **Died with Christ:** crucified with Him, in *v.* 6. **We believe:** an assured conviction. It is also faith in God: for our hope of life rests, like Abraham's faith, on His promise and character. **Shall live with Him:** logical future as in *v.* 5: very appropriate here because this life will continue to endless ages.

Knowing that etc.: ground of the assurance just expressed, viz. the deathless life of **Christ, raised from** the **dead.** He **dies no more:** an unchanging truth, suitably put in the present tense. **Of Him, death is no longer lord:** recalling the royalty usurped in ch. v. 14, 17, to which even Christ submitted.

Of *v.* 9, *v.* 10 is proof. Christ's death on the cross was a death *to sin:* these last words emphatic. Since death is the end of life, and removes a man absolutely from the environment in which he lived, this phrase can only mean that in some real sense, by His death on the cross, Christ escaped absolutely from all contact with sin; just as by death the martyr escapes from his persecutors and his prison. And this we can understand. In Gethsemane, He groaned under the burden of our sins; after His arrest, He was exposed to the insult and fury of bad men; and during many hours He hung in agony on the cross. All this was painful and shameful, though not defiling, contact with sin. And we know not how much it was aggravated by inward conflict with sin. But at sunset the Sufferer was free: by death He had for ever escaped from all contact with the powers of darkness. In this very real

sense, the death **which He died, He died to sin.** For His death on the cross put an end to the mysterious relation to sin into which for our sakes He entered. **Once,** or *once for all:* cp. Heb. vii. 27, ix. 12, 26, 28, x. 10. The separation from sin was final. Moreover, though dead, Christ still *lives.* This is implied in *v.* 8, *we shall live with Him.* And the life **which He lives, He lives for-God.** This last word is the dative of advantage, as in 2 Cor. v. 15, and five times in 1 Cor. vi. 13. It asserts that, of the life of our Risen Lord, God is the one aim, that His every purpose and effort aims only to accomplish the purposes of God. Such was also His life on earth: Jno. iv. 34, vi. 38, xvii. 4. And such doubtless was the life of the pre-incarnate Son of God. Notice here a complete picture of Christ raised from the dead. By His death on the cross He escaped once and for ever from all contact with sin, and He now lives a life of which God is the one and only aim. This is the new life which they who share His escape from sin by His death on the cross expect (*v.* 8) also to share.

The different renderings of the dative, *dead to sin . . . living for God*, are unavoidable. Literally, Paul's words mean, *dead in relation to sin . . . living in relation to God.* But the whole context shows that the relation *to sin* is separation from it, and the relation *to God* is devotion to Him. The R.V. rendering *dead unto sin but alive unto God* is unmeaning. Uniformity is dearly purchased at such a price.

We will now endeavour to rebuild the argument of *vv.* 1—10.

Christ lived once under the curse of sin, and in a body subject to death. But He died; and rose from the dead. By dying, He escaped for ever from all painful contact with sin and sinners, and from death, the result of sin: and He now lives a life of unreserved devotion to God. In former days, we were slaves to sin, and were thus exposed to the righteous anger of God. To make our justification consistent with His own justice, God gave Christ to die; and raised Him from the dead in order that He may be the personal Object of justifying faith. God's purpose is so to unite us to Christ that we may share all that He has and is: and for this end we were united to Him in baptism. We were thus formally joined to One who was by death set free from sin and death, and who was raised by God to a deathless life. Therefore, so far as the purpose of God is accomplished in us, we are dead with Christ. And, if so, all law proclaims us free. We therefore infer that God's purpose is to set us free from all bondage to our own bodies and to sin. We also infer that God designs us to

share the resurrection life of Christ. For we see Him, not only rescued from His enemies by His own death, but living in heaven a life of which God is the only aim. This assures us that God designs us to be united to Christ both in His separation from sin and in His active devotion to God. Therefore, so far as God's purpose is accomplished in us, we are (*v.* 2) dead to sin. Consequently, to continue (*v.* 1) to live in sin, is to resist God's purpose and to renounce the new life to which baptism was designed to be the visible portal.

In the above argument, we find, stated and assumed without proof but with perfect confidence, and made a basis of important moral teaching, a THIRD FUNDAMENTAL DOCTRINE, viz. that God designs the justified to share, so far as creatures can share, by vital union with Christ, all that He has and is, to be like Him by inward contact with Him. This doctrine will meet us again in *v.* 11, chs. vii. 4, viii. 1, 17; also in 1 Cor. vi. 17, 2 Cor. v. 15, 17, Gal. ii. 20, Eph. i. 19, 20, ii. 5, 6, etc. Similar teaching in Jno. xv. 1—8, xvii. 21, 26, 1 Jno. ii. 6, 24, 28, iii. 6, 24, iv. 17. That this remarkable doctrine is assumed with complete confidence but without proof by the two greatest apostles, men altogether different in temperament and modes of thought and almost unknown to each other, and that by one of them it is expressly attributed to Christ, can be accounted for only on the supposition that, like Justification through Faith and through the Death of Christ, it was in some equivalent form actually taught by Christ. This proof is independent of the apostolic authority of Paul.

Notice that the above argument assumes Paul's Second Fundamental Doctrine, viz. Justification through the Death of Christ, taught in chs. iii. 24—26, iv. 25, v. 9, 10. For the only sense in which we can be crucified, dead, and buried with Christ, and thus dead to sin, is that through His death we are saved from sin. Moreover, the conspicuous place of the resurrection of Christ in *vv.* 4, 5, 9 reveals its importance as a link in the chain of salvation, and Paul's firm confidence that He had actually risen: cp. ch. i. 4. This importance is explained in ch. iv. 24, 25, where we read that the faith which justifies is a reliance "on Him who raised Jesus from the dead," and that He "was raised for our justification." Thus the argument now before us assumes Paul's First great Doctrine of Justification through Faith. As we proceed, we shall find that these earlier doctrines imply, as a necessary moral sequence, the new doctrine now before us. Thus each of these three great doctrines implies and confirms and supplements the others.

SECTION XVIII

THEN SERVE SIN NO MORE

CH. VI. 11—14

So also ye, reckon yourselves to be dead to sin but living for God in Christ Jesus. [12] *Then let not sin reign as king in your mortal body, in order to obey its desires.* [13] *Neither present the members of your* body, *as weapons of unrighteousness, to sin; but present yourselves to God as if living from* the *dead, and the members of your* body, *as weapons of righteousness, to God.* [14] *For of you sin shall not be lord: for ye are not under law but under grace.*

In *vv.* 1—10, Paul proved that God wills us to be dead to sin and living a new life: in *vv.* 11—14, he teaches how God's purpose may be realised in us, and bids us claim its realisation: in *vv.* 15—23, he will go on to prove, by comparison of the old and new, that this realisation is for our highest good.

11. Practical application of *v.* 10. **So also ye**: just as Christ once for all died to sin and lives for God, the case of the servants being added to, and corresponding with, that of their Lord. **Reckon**: a mental calculation, as in chs. ii. 3, iii. 28. Since, in this case, it results in a rational and assured conviction resting upon the word and character of God, it is the mental process of faith. **Dead to sin**: completely delivered from it, as Christ escaped from His enemies by His death on the cross. **Living for God**: as Christ lives (*v.* 10) upon the throne. [The particle μέν makes these two sides, negative and positive, of the new life distinct objects of thought.] **In Christ Jesus**: by inward and spiritual contact and union with Him who once died to sin and ever lives for God. So *v.* 23, chs. iii. 24, viii. 1, 2, xii. 5; Eph. i. 3, 4, 6, 7, 9, 10, 12, 13, etc. Same phrase in a slightly different form in Jno. vi. 56, xiv. 20, xv. 2—7, xvii. 21, 1 Jno. ii. 6, 24, 28, etc. It is a conspicuous feature of the teaching of Paul and of John; and represents Christ as the secure refuge and home and vital atmosphere of His servants, in which they are safe and at rest and live. Notice here a double relation to Christ: they are *like* Him, sharing His death to sin and life of devotion to God;

and *in* Him, their likeness to Him being an outflow of inward and vital contact with Him.

The exhortation of this verse is not, like that in ch. v. 1, merely rhetorical. For it is repeated with evident practical earnestness in *vv.* 12, 13, 15—21, as a needful warning and encouragement. The experience here set forth is thus contrasted with pardon or justification, which the N.T. writers never exhort their readers to claim, but always assume that they already have : cp. ch. v. 9, 10, 11, 1 Cor. vi. 11, Eph. i. 7 ; 1 Jno. ii. 12. We have here two stages or sides of the new life, closely related but distinct in thought and usually in time. For many venture to believe that God here and now forgives their past sins, and thus by faith obtain forgiveness, who have not yet dared to believe that in Christ's grave their past life of sin is buried, and that by inward union with Him they will henceforth live a life of unreserved devotion to God.

In this verse, we learn how to obtain this full salvation, viz. by reckoning, at God's bidding and in reliance upon His promise and His wonder-working power, that what He bids us reckon He will Himself, in the moment of our reckoning and henceforth, work in us by inward contact with Him who Himself died to sin and ever lives for God. This involves the great truth that, whatever God requires us to do and to be, He will work in us through Christ and in Christ. In ch. viii. 2—16, we shall learn that this inward union with Christ and new life in Christ is wrought in us by the agency of the Spirit of God.

We come therefore to the cross and to the empty grave of Christ. We remember the sinlessness and the devotion to God of the dead and risen Saviour ; and we know that He died in order that we, by spiritual union with Him, may be like Him. Perhaps until this moment we have been defiled and enslaved by sin and only in small part loyal to God. But God bids us reckon ourselves to be sharers of the death and life of Christ. In view of the earnest love and infinite power manifested in the death and resurrection of Christ, we dare not hesitate ; and in contradiction to our past experience and to our present sense of utter weakness, we say, In Him I am dead to sin and henceforth living only for God. What we say, we reckon at God's bidding to be true ; and God realises in us, in proportion to our faith, by uniting us to Christ, His own word and our faith. Thousands have thus found, by happy experience of the grace and power of God, in a measure unknown to them before, a new life of victory over sin and of loyal devotion to God.

Notice in this verse a FOURTH FUNDAMENTAL DOCTRINE, viz. that the new life of victory over sin and devotion to God is wrought by God, through faith, in those who believe. This doctrine may be called (see under *v.* 19) Sanctification through Faith. It is in close harmony with, and a needful supplement to, Justification through Faith. For complete harmony with God, victory over all sin and unreserved devotion to God are as needful as forgiveness: and we are as little able by our own works to obtain the one as the other. When therefore we have learnt that God, who accepts as righteous those that believe, designs them to be sharers of the moral life of Christ, we are prepared to learn that also this new life in Christ is God's gift to those that believe. This close correspondence and natural inference account for the informal manner in which this fourth doctrine comes before us. It was needless to state it explicitly, or to defend it. For the exposition and defence of justifying faith in ch. iv. avails equally for sanctifying faith. Like the faith of Abraham, expounded in ch. iv. 17—21, the faith which apprehends the new life in Christ is a reliance upon the word and power of God. Paul's explicit assertion and abundant defence of faith as the condition of justification give him a right to assume it silently, as he does here, as the condition of sanctification.

Like justifying faith, sanctifying faith is a reliance upon the word and character of God. But they differ in their object-matter. The one accepts and appropriates the promise of pardon for all who believe: the other accepts and appropriates the promise of complete salvation from all sin and of a new life of devotion to God like that of Christ. Moreover, this latter is at once verified by a conscious experience of victory over sin and of felt loyalty to God: and this inward verification verifies also the faith with which we ventured to accept the Gospel of pardon.

12. Further exhortation arising out of the exhortation foregoing. **Sin reign**: as in ch. v. 21. **In your body**: as the throne and basis of its royal power. Cp. Rev. iii. 21: "sit with Me *in* My throne." **Mortal**: emphatic, as in ch. viii. 11, "your *mortal* bodies." That our body is not yet rescued from corruption and is therefore still under the dominion of the foe, is a reason why we should not submit to a power which seeks to dominate us by means of our body. **In order to obey etc.**: purpose for which men permit sin to usurp authority over them through their bodies, viz. they wish to gratify, i.e. *to obey* **its desires.** *Desire:* a definite wish going after an object pleasant or helpful. Same word in chs. i. 24, vii. 7, 8, xiii. 14: cp. "*desire* of the flesh" in Gal. v. 16, 24,

Eph. ii. 3. It is in itself neither good nor bad: see Ph. i. 23, 1 Th. ii. 17, Lk. xv. 16, xvi. 21, xvii. 22, xxii. 15. The moral colour of the desire is reflected on it from the context. Hence the unsuitability of the R.V. rendering *lust*. But obedience to *the desires of the body* as a directive principle of action always leads to sin. For the body is the lower side of our nature, is essentially selfish, caring for nothing except itself, and is unconscious of the moral law. It therefore needs to be held in by a strong hand, to be laid (see *v.* 13) on the altar of God, and to be used for His service. To permit the body to rule, i.e. to make gratification of its appetites, or even its preservation, the end of life, is to permit sin to reign over us as king, and our bodies, already doomed to decay, to become its throne. Against such submission, and such motive, Paul warns his readers.

13. Another exhortation, the negative side expounding the practical result of obeying the desires of the body, and the positive side expounding what is involved in "living for God." **Present**: so *vv.* 16, 19, xii. 1; cp. xvi. 2, Col. i. 22, 28: to place at the disposal of another. **Members**: the various parts of the body, each with its own faculty: ch. xii. 4, 1 Cor. xii. 12, 14, 18, 19, Mt. v. 29, 30, etc. Its looser modern use has led me to render *members* **of your** body. **Weapons**: instruments for carrying on war: ch. xiii. 12, 2 Cor. vi. 7, x. 4, Jno. xviii. 3. Being used for an evil purpose, they are *weapons* **of unrighteousness.** To obey the desires of our body, is to place our hands and lips at the disposal of **sin** to be *weapons* which it will use in *unrighteous* war.

Yourselves: the personality behind the bodily powers, given up, not to sin, but **to God. Present** *yourselves* **as if living from** the **dead**: looking upon yourselves *as if* your life had come to an end, as if ye had been laid in, and raised from, the grave, and thus raised *from* among the *dead*, and as if now *living* a resurrection life; and, thus viewing your position, place *yourselves* at the disposal of *God*. **And your members etc.**: a detail involved in *present yourselves*. **Weapons of righteousness**: a marked contrast: our hands and lips given **to God** to be used by Him in His righteous war. Instead of obeying the desires of our body, and thus permitting sin to erect its throne there and to use our bodily powers for its own ends, Paul bids us place our whole personality at the disposal of God, resolving that henceforth our hands shall do His work, our feet run on His errands, and our lips speak His message, in His conflict against sin. Notice here a new view of Christian duty. God bids us, not merely to avoid sin, but to place

ourselves with all we have and are at His disposal for use in the tremendous struggle now going on between good and evil.

14. Encouragement to obey the foregoing exhortation. This last implies complete deliverance from service of sin. And Paul assures us, **sin shall not be your lord. Under law**: governed by God on the principle, Do this and live, i.e. treated by Him according to our obedience. Such was God's relation to Israel under the Old Covenant. Hence the Jews were *under law*: 1 Cor. ix. 20, Gal. iv. 4, 5. Some Christians desired to remain under the same terms: Gal. iv. 21. This momentary reference to the Law prepares a way for further teaching about it in ch. vii. **Under grace**: under a method of government determined not by mere justice but by the undeserved *favour* of God, i.e. *under* the reign (ch. v. 21) of *grace*. God makes, not our deserts, but His own goodwill the standard of His treatment of us. Otherwise He would never have given His Son to die for us, or have brought to bear upon us, while in our sins, those influences (see ch. ii. 4) which led us to repentance and salvation. Upon the ground that God will treat us, not according to our works, i.e. according to the letter of the Law, but according to His undeserved favour, rest all our hopes of blessing from Him.

In *vv.* 11—14, we have the Law and the Gospel of the new life in Christ, what God claims from us and what He is ready to work in us. He claims that we devote to Him and His service our whole personality and all our bodily powers. Incidentally we learn that He who makes this claim is engaged in tremendous conflict, and that He claims our devotion in order that He may use us in His righteous war against sin. Unfortunately we are not free to render to God the devotion He justly claims. For His foe is our lord: we are the fettered slaves of sin, and therefore cannot serve God. Paul bids us look upon ourselves as if we were dead, dead on the cross of Christ and buried in His grave, and thus free from our former bondage; and, though dead, yet living, sharing the life of the Risen One, a life of unreserved loyalty to God.

In obedience to this claim, we now lay, upon the altar consecrated by the blood of Christ, ourselves and all our bodily powers; and we do this in faith, relying upon the promise and power of God that from this moment we shall be free from our old master and shall live by inward contact with Christ a life like His. This consecration and faith are a higher counterpart to the repentance and faith which are the condition of justification.

SECTION XIX

EXPERIENCE PROVES HOW BAD IS THE SERVICE OF SIN

CH. VI. 15—23

What then? Let us sin because we are not under law but under grace? Be it not so. [16] *Know ye not that, to whom ye present yourselves servants for obedience,* his *servants ye are,* of him *whom ye obey, whether of sin for death or of obedience for righteousness?* [17] *But thanks to God that ye were servants of sin, but ye obeyed from* the *heart* the *type of teaching to which ye were given up.* [18] *And, having been made free from sin, ye were made servants to righteousness.* [19] *After the manner of men I speak, because of the weakness of your flesh. For just as ye presented the members* of *your* body, *as servants, to uncleanness and to lawlessness, for lawlessness, so now present the members* of *your* body, as *servants, to righteousness for sanctification.* [20] *For, when ye were servants of sin, ye were free in regard of righteousness.* [21] *What fruit had ye at that time* from *the things of which ye are now ashamed? For the end of those things* is *death.* [22] *But now, having been made free from sin and having been made servants to God, ye have your fruit, for sanctification; and the end, eternal life.* [23] *For the wages of sin* is *death: but God's gift of grace* is *eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

The two courses set before us in *v.* 13, Paul will now further describe, and will thus give good reasons why we should refuse the one and choose the other.

15. What then? as in *v.* 1. Does anyone say, **Let us sin because** God treats us **not** on principles of strict **law** but of undeserved **grace?** This is another objection, in addition to that in *v.* 1, to the Gospel. This last reveals the *favour* of God to our race; and, relying on His favour, some have carelessly run into sin.

16. They who thus sin **know not** what they do. **Present yourselves:** thrust prominently forward to recall the same words in

v. 13. The natural order would be, *Do ye not know that ye are servants of him to whom ye present yourselves etc.* This verse implies the universal principle that if we *obey* a man we so far make ourselves his *servants* and use our powers to work out his purposes. So Aristotle, *Nic. Ethics* bk. viii. 11. 6: "The *servant* (slave) is a living instrument; the instrument, a lifeless *servant*." Therefore, before we do the bidding of another, we must inquire who he is and what are his purposes. **Servant,** or *slave:* so ch. i. 1: one who acts habitually at the bidding of another, his lord; cp. Mt. viii. 9: a cognate verb in Rom. vi. 6. It was the common word for Greek and Roman slaves: hence the contrast with "made free" in *vv.* 18, 20, 22; cp. 1 Cor. vii. 21, 22, xii. 13, Gal. iii. 28, Eph. vi. 8, Col. iii. 11, Rev. vi. 15. In contrast to a freeman, the slave was compelled to do the bidding of his lord. **For obedience:** purpose for which one gives himself up to be a slave. This is emphasised by the repetition, **whom ye obey. Whether of sin . . . or of obedience:** the only alternative. That to commit sin is to be a slave of sin, Christ solemnly asserts in Jno. viii. 34.

Death: not of the body, which is not a result of our own sin, but of the whole man: so *vv.* 21, 23, ch. viii. 13, Rev. xx. 14; cp. Mt. x. 28. It is the "destruction" of ch. ii. 12, Ph. iii. 19; the final penalty of sin. All *sin* tends inevitably to *death:* therefore, in Paul's personification, they who commit sin may be said to surrender themselves to the abstract principle of *sin* in order to work out *death.* On the other hand, *obedience*, also personified, tends always to **righteousness,** i.e. to conformity with the moral law. See under ch. i. 17. This verse implies that the only alternative is either to commit *sin* and thus work out its constant tendency, *death*, or to *obey* God and thus act in harmony with that which the moral law requires.

17. Review of the past, in the light of *v.* 16, and evoking **thanks to God. Ye were slaves etc.:** their former bondage, by its contrast with their present liberty, itself calls forth gratitude. **Type:** as in ch. v. 14. *Type* **of teaching:** in outline, like the mark (Jno. xx. 25) made by iron on clay. The English word *stamp* is used in a similar way. **Given-up:** as in chs. i. 24, 26, 28, iv. 25, and especially Acts xiv. 26. These words imply that the obedience of the Roman Christians was submission to the Gospel in that form in which, by the Providence of God, it had been preached to them. Practically it was the Gospel as preached to Gentiles, (cp. ch. i. 5, Acts xvii. 30,) in contrast to Jewish perversions; but not in contrast

to the teaching of other apostles. For we cannot conceive Paul thanking God that the Romans heard the Gospel from men taught by himself rather than from the disciples of Peter or John. The patriarchs, and the Israelites under Moses and afterwards under the prophets, were handed over to other types of teaching.

18. Further description of the change. Being "dead to sin," they were **made free from sin.** Paul here assumes that his readers have made the reckoning to which in *v.* 11 he exhorted them. **Made-servants,** literally *enslaved,* **to righteousness:** cp. 1 Cor. vii. 22, "the freeman, having been called, is a *slave* of Christ." The whole context (see my note) and the sustained contrast of *slave* and *freeman* demand some such rendering. We are not hired servants who can leave their master's employ. For we are Christ's by creation and ransom; and are therefore bound to Him by a tie we cannot break. Yet we are free: for His service is our delight. *Servants to righteousness:* bound by loyalty to Christ to do that which the moral law demands.

19. After the manner of men: cp. ch. iii. 5. It might seem improper to describe the servants of Christ by the common term for slaves. But Paul teaches divine truth by the words of common life; and here warns us to distinguish between the outward form and the underlying truth. This warning holds good for the whole Bible: to men God always speaks as men do. **Flesh:** see note under ch. viii. 11. **Weakness of your** *flesh:* inability to understand, arising from the limitations of bodily life, which always tend to warp our mental vision; and from the peculiar limitations of the Roman Christians. Paul uses a comparison made needful by their only partial emancipation from the intellectual rule of flesh and blood.

Now follows, as a reason for the foregoing warning, an exhortation closely parallel to that in *v.* 13. **Just as . . . so now:** the past affording a pattern, in an opposite direction, for the present. Instead of "weapons," as in *v.* 13, we have here **servants,** or *slaves:* used as a neuter adjective. **Uncleanness . . . lawlessness:** further personifications parallel to, and specifying, "sin" in *v.* 16. They remind us that sin defiles, and forces into antagonism to the Law, those who obey it. **For lawlessness:** in order to do that which the Law forbids: parallel to "for death" in *v.* 16. Sin leads, first to defilement and lawlessness, and then to death. **To righteousness:** as in *v.* 18. **Sanctification:** the act of making holy: so *v.* 22, 1 Cor. i. 30, 1 Th. iv. 3, 4, 7, 2 Th. ii. 13, 1 Tim. ii. 15, Heb. xii. 14, 1 Pet. i. 2. See

note under ch. i. 7. As claimed by God, all Christians are already objectively holy: so ch. i. 7. Paul now bids his readers to lay their various bodily powers upon the altar of God to do His work in harmony with the moral law, in order that thus they may become subjectively holy: **for** *sanctification*. Cp. 1 Cor. vii. 34, 1 Th. v. 23.

20—22. A comparison of the two kinds of service, based on experience. **Free in regard of righteousness**: if there is any bondage in doing right, they were *free* from it. They have therefore given the service of sin a fair trial. **What fruit?** what good result, as an organic outworking of certain actions? See under ch. i. 13. The actions are past, but the shame still remains: **ye are now ashamed.** Paul passes in silence over the answer which memory and conscience are compelled to give; and states the reason why his readers reaped no harvest from the fields of shame in which they toiled. **The end**: the final outworking in which influences attain their goal: so *v.* 22, x. 4, 1 Cor. xv. 24, 2 Cor. xi. 15, Ph. iii. 19. Inasmuch as influences which have attained their full result cease to operate—otherwise they have not attained their full result—the word sometimes connotes the idea of cessation. So Lk. i. 33. But the idea of a goal attained is always present. The final outworking of **those things** to which Paul refers is **death**: as in *v.* 16. His readers gathered no *fruit* from their former actions: *for* they trod a path whose *end* is *death.*

22. Their present position, in joyful contrast to their former fruitless toil. **Having-been-made-free . . . having-been-made-servants**: solemn repetition, from *v.* 19. **Ye have your fruit**: the good results of your toil are your abiding possession: cp. Ph. i. 22. **For sanctification**: as in *v.* 19: direction and tendency of these good results. They tend towards the devotion of our powers to the service of God. **The end**: in conspicuous antithesis to the same words in *v.* 21. **Eternal life**: see under ch. ii. 7. It recalls ch. v. 21. Notice in solemn contrast, in *vv.* 21, 22, the two poles of N.T. eschatology: *death . . . eternal life.*

23. Compact restatement of the foregoing contrast. **Wages**: so Lk. iii. 14, 1 Cor. ix. 7, 2 Cor. xi. 8: the common term for the pay and rations of a soldier, thus recalling *v.* 13. They who serve in the army of sin receive **death** in return for their service. **Gift-of-grace**: recalling the same word in ch. v. 15, 16. *Death* is *the* just *wages* **of sin**: but **eternal life** is a gift of *the* undeserved *favour* **of God. In Christ Jesus**: as in *v.* 11. Eternal life is ours in virtue of His death and resurrection, and by vital union

with the dead and risen One. **Our Lord**: the Master whom we serve. This addition (contrast *v.* 11) recalls the idea of service, and the contrast of masters, which run through *vv.* 12—23. In each case, the end is in harmony with the nature of the master obeyed.

The contrast of past and present in *vv.* 16—23 is a very powerful motive for avoiding all sin, and is therefore a complete answer to the question in *v.* 15. To commit sin, is to place our bodily faculties at the disposal of an unseen power absolutely and actively hostile to God and tending always to death, a murderer from the beginning. On the other hand, the consecration of our faculties to the service of God produces for us good and abiding results culminating in eternal life. To commit sin, and thus to abandon the service of God, because God treats us, not on principles of mere justice, but with undeserved favour, is to destroy ourselves simply because we have power to do so.

CHAPTER VI. deals with one subject, the believer's relation to his former life of sin, in answer to the question of *v.* 1. We must not continue in sin in order to work out the gracious purposes of God: for His purpose is that our former life of sin be buried in the grave of Christ and that we henceforth share His resurrection life: *vv.* 2—10. Paul then teaches how this purpose of God may be accomplished in us, viz. by reckoning it to be here and now achieved in us by inward union with Christ; and urges us to claim the fulfilment of this purpose: *vv.* 11—13. To this he encourages us, in *v.* 14, by pointing to our altered relation to God; and gives, in *vv.* 16—23, a very strong motive for unreserved consecration to the service of God. The chapter concludes with words almost the same as those at the end of ch. v. But how vast the progress we have made. Each chapter brings us within view of life eternal. But, as a consequence of the reign of grace through Christ, announced in ch. v., we have now an inward and vital union with Him in His death, burial, and resurrection, resulting in complete deliverance from the service of sin and in a life of unreserved devotion to God like that of Christ. In ch. v., we had justification, knowledge of God's love to us, and a joyful hope of glory: we are now sharers of the holy and immortal life of Christ.

SECTION XX

THROUGH CHRIST WE DIED TO THE LAW

CH. VII. 1—6

Or, are ye ignorant, brethren, (for to men who know law, I speak,) that the Law is lord of the man for so long time as he lives? [2] *For the woman with a husband, to the living husband, is bound by law: but if the husband die, she is made of no effect from the law of the husband.* [3] *Therefore, while the husband lives, an adulteress she will be called if she become another man's: but if the husband die, she is free from the law, so as not to be an adulteress, though she have become another man's.* [4] *So that, my brethren, also ye were made dead to the Law through the body of Christ that ye might become another's, His who was raised from* the *dead, in order that we may bear fruit for God.* [5] *For when we were in the flesh, the emotions of sins,* aroused *through the Law, were at work in the members* of *our* body, *in order to bear fruit for death.* [6] *But now we have been made of no effect from the Law, having died to that in which we were held down, so that we may serve in newness of Spirit, and not in oldness of letter.*

The argument of ch. vi. might to some appear invalid because it left out of sight the Law and the curse therein pronounced against all who commit sin. Our surrender to the bondage of sin was a just punishment of our disobedience. Does not God, by breaking off fetters imposed by the Law, dishonour the Law? This question Paul will answer by discussing in ch. vii. the teaching of ch. vi. in its bearing on the Law. It was suggested by the words *not under law* in ch. vi. 14. He will prove in ch. vii. 1—6 that by a strictly legal process we have been set free from the Law which formerly bound us to the service of sin and forbad our union with Christ; in *vv.* 7—12, that, though freedom from the Law gives us life, yet the Law is not bad; and in *vv.* 13—25 he will show us the purpose and working of the death-bringing Law, and thus prove its excellence.

1. To men who know law: to Jews and others familiar with the Law of Moses, and to Gentiles familiar with the universal

principles underlying all *law*. This is the new and important feature of ch. vii., as of ch. ii. 12—29. **The Law**: the divinely-given and authoritative Law of Moses, ever present in the religious thought of Jews. But the principle here asserted applies to every authoritative prescription of conduct. We therefore cannot infer from this verse that Paul's readers were chiefly Jews. **Is-lord of**: as in ch. vi. 9. **So long time as he lives**: conceding to *the Law* all it can claim, the concession suggesting a limitation.

2. The woman with a husband: a case in point involving the whole principle of law. The emphatic word **living** suggests a limitation valid in all law, and expressly stated in the rest of the verse. **Bound**: a feature of all law: it limits our action. **Made-of-no-effect from**: as in chs. iii. 3, 31, iv. 14, vi. 6: made practically non-existent in the eyes of the Law. It is equivalent to *free from* in *v.* 3. **But if the husband die,** the woman goes beyond the operation of **the law of the husband**: i.e. the statute which forbids her to marry another. For the phrase *law of*, see Lev. vi. 9, 14, etc.

3. Fuller statement of the case of a married woman, as an inference from the principle stated in *v.* 1: **therefore etc.** *The husband* may be a tyrant and murderer: *another*, kind and good, may wish to make her his wife. Yet, **while the husband lives,** *the Law* steps in and brands her as an **adulteress** if she attempts to escape from the tyrant by giving herself **to another man. But if the husband die**: same words as in *v.* 2. By his death she ceases to be a wife; and passes, according to an essential principle of law, from under control of the law which forbad her second marriage. Death, without setting aside **the law,** has made her **free from** it. The case of the wife is specially suitable to the matter before us. For, in other cases, e.g. a man condemned to imprisonment for a term of years, the person set free by death is by death removed from our observation. But the widow is before our eyes, living and free. Moreover, her case suggests an important and beautiful metaphor: cp. 2 Cor. xi. 2, Eph. v. 25—27.

4. Application of the foregoing case to ourselves: **so that also ye etc. Made-dead to the Law**: placed beyond its control, as though we were dead: cp. Gal. ii. 19, a close parallel. **Through the body of Christ**: nailed to the cross. Through Christ's death, we were set free from the divine law which condemned us, for our sins, to be slaves of sin. **That ye might become another's**: God's purpose in saving us from bondage to sin, viz. that we might be united to Christ. Inasmuch as we are saved by the death of

Him to whom God designs us to be united, it is needful to add that He **was raised from** the **dead**: cp. ch. vi. 4, 5, 9. Had He not died, we had not been released: had He not risen, he would not have become our husband. **Bear-fruit for God**: practically the same as "fruit for sanctification" in ch. vi. 22. We were united to Christ that we may live a life producing good results, such as will advance the purposes of God.

To fill up the comparison, we must consider ourselves to have been, not merely the servant, but the wife, of sin. Our husband was a murderer. But we had chosen him for our lord: and the Law recognised the marriage. God's original purpose was that we should be the bride of His Son. But we gave ourselves to Sin; and the Law then forbad our union with Christ. In ch. vi., however, we have learnt that through Christ's death we ourselves are dead. Therefore, according to ch. vii. 1—3, we are legally free from the Law which forbad our marriage with Christ. We are made free by the death of One to whom we are so closely related that in the eyes of the Law His death is our death.

Translated into the language of common life, this verse teaches that through the death of Christ is removed a barrier to our restoration to normal and blessed relation to Christ and to God having its foundation in the Law of God.

5. Reason why, "in order to bear fruit for God," we must needs be "made dead to the Law;" and a restatement of the contrast of past and present. **In the flesh**: the material of our body as the environment in which the spirit lives, moves, and acts, an environment controlling at that time our entire action and thought. It is not so now. The flesh is (see Gal. ii. 20, 2 Cor. x. 3) the physical, but no longer the moral, element of our life. For although we ever feel its influence, it no longer controls us. **The emotions of sins**: emotions of desire evoked by forbidden objects in those who yield to their influence, and tending to produce sinful acts. They were evoked **by means of the Law**: strange words designed to awaken surprise and to prompt the objection in *v.* 7. They will be explained in *vv.* 7—11. **When we were** *in the flesh*, these *emotions* **were at work** (cp. 2 Cor. iv. 12, Eph. ii. 2, 2 Th. ii. 7) **in our members**, the various parts of our bodies, moving our lips, hands, and feet, to words, deeds, and ways, of sin. When the body with its appetites was the controlling element of our life, it was the seat of emotions prompting sin. **In order to bear fruit etc**: tendency and purpose of these emotions. They made us fruitful; but the fruit was poison. Of this, Paul's own earlier

history was a literal and sad example. **For death**: as in ch. vi. 16, 21, 23. *Fruit for death:* in awful contrast to "fruit for God," in *v.* 4. Since these emotions, evoked by means of the Law, were at work with such deadly intent, we must needs die to the Law in order that we may bear fruit for God.

6. But now: introducing, as in ch. vi. 22, the joyful contrast ever present to Paul's thought. **Made-of-no-effect from the Law**: as in *v.* 2, which it recalls. **Having died to that in which etc.**: event which released us from the Law *in which* **we were held-down,** or *held-fast:* same word in ch. i. 18. **So that we may serve**: happy result of our liberation. [The infinitive with ὥστε states not objective fact, as does the indicative, but a subjective view of cause and effect.] *Serve:* same word as in *v.* 25, ch. vi. 6; cognate to *servants* in ch. vi. 16, 17, 19, 20, and to *made-servants* in *vv.* 18, 22. This family of words is a conspicuous feature of chs. vi. 6—vii. 6. Notice that we are still servants or slaves, but (ch. vi. 22) to different masters and **in** a *new* environment. **Newness of Spirit**: a *new* order of things of which the characterizing feature is the animating presence of the *Spirit* of God, in contrast to an **old** environment characterized by possession of a written **letter.** Same contrast of *Spirit* and *letter* in ch. ii. 29; and, more fully developed, in 2 Cor. iii. 3, 6, where "the *Spirit* of God" is contrasted with the letters written on the tables of stone. And this is probably the reference of the word *Spirit* here and in ch. ii. 29: for it is evidently a forerunner of "the Spirit of God" in ch. viii. 9, 11, 14. If so, the *letter* must be the written Law of Moses, in possession of which the Jews (ch. ii. 23) boasted. The *new* feature of our present service is that our Master has given us, not a mere written word bidding us do this or that, but an animating Spirit, who opens our minds to understand and approve the will of God, and enables us to do it. This gift of the Spirit makes our present service altogether *new*, and our former service altogether *old.*

The above argument has less force for us than for Paul's readers. To any who objected that the teaching of ch. vi. would set aside the Law of Moses, it was a complete reply to say that the Law claims jurisdiction only over the living, and that believers are practically dead. But to us God has given a more tremendous and far-reaching law. To those who reject it, the Gospel is itself a condemning law: for they who disbelieve its promises are compelled to believe its threatenings. And from this law death is no deliverance: for its threatenings control the world to come

Hence the argument, in the form in which it stands here, does not meet our case.

But, underneath the Jewish form of this argument, lie great and abiding principles of immense importance. It is a reassertion, in another form, of Paul's exposition, in ch. iii. 26, of the purpose for which God gave Christ to die, viz. to harmonize with His own justice the justification of believers. For, that we are in *v.* 4 said to be "dead to the Law through the body of Christ" can only mean that through His death is removed a barrier to salvation having its foundation in the Law of God. Now the Law is a literary embodiment of the justice of God. Consequently, to say that the Law forbad our rescue, is to say that the justice of God forbad it. But Paul has taught that God set forth Christ as a propitiation in His blood, in order that God may be Himself just and a justifier of Him that believes in Jesus. If so, through the death of Christ we are set free, in harmony with the principle of law, from the law which condemned us to be slaves of the master we had so perversely chosen. This important coincidence of thought, under totally different phraseology, confirms our interpretation of ch. iii. 26; is confirmed by Gal. ii. 19, iii. 13, Col. ii. 14, and by an interesting illustration in Heb. ix. 16, 17, in all which passages the death of Christ is placed in relation to the Law; and sheds important light on the necessity and purpose of the death of Christ. This coincidence is the more important because no other N.T. writer connects the death of Christ with the justice or the law of God.

This teaching has also experimental value. Many conscientious men feel that for God to pardon their sins and to smile upon sinners would be to set aside the eternal principles which underlie morality. And, because they know that God will not do this, they dare not believe His proclamation of pardon. They are in the position of a woman who has made a ruinous marriage from which now there is no escape. But in these verses we are reminded that the death of Christ, by revealing the inevitable connection of sin and death, has satisfied the external moral principles which forbad our pardon; and that now, without infringing them, God may and will set us free.

CHAPTERS VI. 1—VII. 6 describe the new life in its relation to sin, to the Law, to Christ, and to God. It is complete deliverance from *sin*, removes us legally from the domain of *the Law* which condemned us, unites us *to Christ* in His death and burial and in

His resurrection life, a life of fruitful devotion *to God*. Notice the complete confidence with which Paul accepts the death and resurrection of Christ as historic facts, and as essential factors in God's purpose of salvation, a confidence moulding his thought and creating new modes of thought and new phraseology peculiar to him. In his theology, the events which closed the life of Christ on earth are reproduced in His servants. This confidence, in (Gal. i. 13) a former persecutor, can be explained only by the reality of that which he believed: and no account of Paul's teaching which does not explain this remarkable element in it can be tolerated for a moment.

Certain strange assertions in *v.* 5, needing explanation and defence, will next claim the apostle's attention.

SECTION XXI

YET THE LAW IS NOT BAD

CH. VII. 7—12

What then shall we say? Is *the Law sin? Be it not so. Nevertheless, I had not known sin except through law: for I should not know desire except the Law said, "Thou shalt not desire."* [8] *But sin, having taken occasion, through the commandment worked out in me every desire. For apart from law sin* is *dead.* [9] *Moreover, I was alive apart from law once. But when the commandment came, sin returned to life; and I died.* [10] *And to me the commandment which* was *for life, this was found* to be *for death.* [11] *For sin, having taken occasion, through the commandment deceived me and through it slew me.* [12] *So that on the one hand the Law* is *holy, and the commandment holy and just and good*——

7. What then shall we say? What inference shall we draw? as in chs. vi. 1, iv. 1. **The Law:** of Moses, from which Paul quotes the tenth commandment. **Sin:** an embodiment of sin; cp. 2 Cor. v. 21, Rom. viii. 7. In *v.* 5, Paul gave as a reason why we

were put to death to the Law that "through the Law came the emotions of sins" which "were at work" in our bodily powers with deadly purpose. He now asks, Are we to infer from this that the Law itself is essentially hostile to God? and thus suggests a most serious objection to his foregoing teaching. This inference, Paul meets with an emphatic negative; and then gives the correct inference. He did not say, nor do his words imply, that the Law is the voice of an enemy; **nevertheless,** he does say that, had there been no law as an avenue of approach, there had been no sin. To this reply and the following argument, Paul gives great reality and force by narrating his own experience: **I had not known sin.** That he narrates it in proof of a general principle, implies that it is the experience of all. The word *law* does not limit this experience to Jews: for the great principles of morality which underlie all law are written (see ch. ii. 14) in the hearts of all men. But Paul, writing as a Jew, has in his mind the Law in that form in which he received it, viz. the voice of Sinai and the books in which from childhood that voice had spoken to him. Hence, as a sample of the Law, he quotes the tenth commandment. To *know sin*, denotes, not as in ch. iii. 20 a consciousness of having sinned, but that acquaintance with the nature and power of sin which is an immediate and terrible result of committing sin. This deeper meaning is involved in the further description given in *v.* 8. In this sense, the forbidden tree was the "tree of knowledge of good and evil," and Christ (2 Cor. v. 21) "knew no sin;" but (Isa. liii. 3) He knew grief; and Paul knew (2 Cor. v. 11) "the fear of the Lord." **Through law:** recalling same words in *v.* 5. The foregoing statement, Paul proves by quoting, as a fair example, one of the many commands of **the Law: thou shalt not desire:** word for word (LXX.) from Ex. xx. 17. **Desire:** as in chs. i. 24, vi. 12: not necessarily bad desire. The tenth commandment forbids, not all desire, but desire of other men's goods. Paul takes for granted that we know the rest of the passage. That he refers throughout *vv.* 7, 8 to evil desire, is made clear by the whole context. In proof of the general statement *I had not known sin*, he quotes the commandment most easily and frequently broken, the breach of which leads to that of all others. Had it not been for the Law, Paul would have been a stranger even to the beginnings of sin in wrong desire.

8. Occasion: Lk. xi. 54, 2 Cor. v. 12, xi. 12: a starting-point, the first step in a line of action. In the tenth **commandment** (cp. ch. xiii. 9) **sin** found a starting-point for deadly activity; and

through it **worked-out** (as in chs. i. 27, ii. 9, iv. 15, v. 3) **in** Paul **every** kind of **desire.** Sin thus made itself known to him. This is what Paul meant in *v.* 5 by "the emotions of sins which were through the Law." Notice the contrast of *working-in* and *working-out* in *vv.* 5, 8: so Ph. ii. 12, 13. The one denotes inward activity; the other, actual result.

For apart etc.: a general principle proving the foregoing. Notice a further personification of *sin.* We have seen it as a king enthroned in the bodies of men, making unrighteous war, using men as weapons and paying them wages, cherishing and working out purposes of death. Paul now proves that only through the Law were sinful desires wrought in him, by saying that *apart* **from law sin** is **dead.** Since sin is here personified as active and powerful, to say that it is *dead*, is to say that it is inactive and powerless. Just so a dead lion has claws and sinews, but no strength or activity. In Jas. ii. 17—26, a dead faith is one which produces no results: contrast a "living hope" and "living word of God" in 1 Pet. i. 3, 23.

The principle here stated and the argument built upon it demand further study. "Sin is lawlessness:" 1 Jno. iii. 4. It is doing what God has forbidden. Consequently, had not certain objects been marked off as forbidden, there could not have been even wrong desire: for all desires would have been right. Therefore, but for the Law, we should never have known what it is to desire forbidden things; nor have known by experience the depraving effects of such desires. There would have been no moral character, and no sin. This we may illustrate from the story of Paradise. If God had given no prohibition, the tempter would have had no weapon of attack; and our parents would have been utterly beyond his reach. He brought in his mouth a command of God, and used it as a weapon of deception and murder, evoking first desire and then actual sin. Only thus can we conceive sin entering into human life. In this sense, sin is powerless apart from law; and all sinful emotions come through law. So 1 Cor. xv. 56: "The power of sin is the Law."

9—11. Further description and fatal result of the personal experience narrated in *v.* 8. Paul says, **Once,** in a day gone by, **I was alive** or *living*, **without law,** having no command requiring obedience. Then **the commandment,** the 10th or others, **came:** at its coming **sin lived-again,** as a dead body waking up into life: **and I died.** On this event Paul makes the sad comment, **the commandment** which was designed **for life,** i.e. to give or maintain

life, **this was found by me** to be **for death.** [Notice the preposition εἰς, which always denotes tendency, denoting first purpose, as usually, and then result. This different use of the same preposition in the same short sentence is made easy by the personification of sin. For, if sin be personified, we may speak of its tendency as a purpose.] *The commandment* given in Paradise was designed to save *life* by guarding our parents from the tree of death. The Law of Moses had the same purpose: Lev. xviii. 5, Dt. v. 33. Indeed, all that comes from the Author of Life, is designed to give or maintain life. In those who believe, the Law attains its end by leading them to Christ: Gal. iii. 24.

Then follows, in *v.* 11, a sad restatement, in almost the same words, of the great calamity stated in *v.* 8. An added detail is that **sin . . . deceived me**: so Gen. iii. 13. Same strong word in 2 Cor. xi. 3 (cp. 1 Tim. ii. 14), in reference to Eve; also Rom. xvi. 18, 1 Cor. iii. 18. Sin kills by persuading that the forbidden object is good: so Gen. iii. 5. **Slew me**: restating *v.* 9, *I died.* It is a result of the "desire" evoked by sin: *v.* 8. While sin lay dead or dormant, Paul was alive: but at the voice of the Law it woke up to life, and slew him.

We have seen, under *v.* 9, that to Paul sin was once *dead* in the sense of being powerless and inoperative; and that at the coming of the Law it sprang into *life* in the sense that in the commands of the Law it found a starting-point for activity and effect. We now ask, In what sense was Paul himself once *alive* or *living*, apart from law, and in what sense at the coming of the Law can it be said that he *died?* These words, when applied to Paul, a man capable of life and death in the fullest sense, must have a meaning far deeper than they can have when applied to sin, a mere abstract principle. But this deeper meaning must be in harmony with the essential significance of the words and with Paul's argument.

The sadness of *vv.* 9—11 implies that the death which Paul *died* was a great calamity. It was wrought by sin using the Law as a weapon. Already in ch. vi. 16, 21, 23 we have learnt that death is a result of sin. This can be no other than the "destruction" or ruin (see under ch. ii. 12) which awaits sinners beyond the grave, destruction of body and soul. Now in ch. viii. 10 Paul speaks of the body as already *dead*, because already doomed inevitably to the grave; and in Eph. ii. 1, 5, 1 Tim. v. 6 of sinners as already *dead* by means of their sins. So 1 Jno. iii. 14. This language is easily explained. We constantly speak of that which

is inevitable as though it had actually taken place: for the future tense suggests uncertainty. The bad man is not dying but dead. For a dying man may recover by his own vital force, or a doctor may save him: but no power can save a bad man from the awful penalty of sin and give him moral life except that of Him who raises the dead. This language is the more appropriate because the sinner is in a very real sense separated from God the Source of life, destitute of the Holy Spirit who is the breath of the new life of the sons of God, and is, like a corpse, in a state of progressive (moral) corruption.

In this sense, in spite of the outward morality mentioned in Ph. iii. 6, Paul was dead before (ch. viii. 2) "the Spirit of Life" in Christ Jesus made him free. Just as Lazarus could look back to a time when his body lay rotting in the grave, so Paul remembered a time when he was in a state which, but for the life-giving power of God, would have inevitably developed into eternal death.

Of this death, the Law was the instrument. For, had there been no prohibition, Paul could not have sinned and thus fallen under the death-penalty of sin.

When was Paul *alive, without law?* Not while he was persecuting the Church and thus fighting against God. For he was then (chs. ii. 12, vi. 14, 1 Cor. ix. 20) in law and under law: and indisputably (Eph. ii. 1—5) he was spiritually dead. To say that he was then *alive*, is utterly alien from the thought of Paul and of the entire New Testament. But at a still earlier day, in infancy before the age of responsibility, he possessed a real though immature life which death of the body could not destroy. However deeply a man be sunk in sin, however completely under its power to-day, he can look back to the early dawn of memory and say, In those days God smiled on me, and in the full sense of the word I was alive: and this is the saddest thought the bad man can have. But the infant grew to boyhood. Through his mother's lips, the commandment came to him; and he learnt that God had forbidden him to do this and that. Now awoke to activity the innate but slumbering power of sin. Following the guidance of nature, like other men, he fell under the anger of God and became dead by means of his trespasses: Eph. ii. 3, 5. His death was loss of the life he possessed in the days of innocence, was wrought by sin, and by means of the Law.

The above exposition is the only one possible. For in no sense can a man be called *alive* when he is asleep in sin, or be said to *die* when he wakes up to consciousness of his awful position. Nor

could the loss of such life, or such moral awakening, be spoken of in the tone of sadness which breathes in *vv.* 9, 11. For such awakening, however painful, was not a calamity, but the dawn of a new life.

On the other hand, the metaphorical language used here and in Eph. ii. 1—5 must be interpreted with utmost caution. The mortality of infancy reminds us that by birth we are in some measure heirs of the penalty of Adam's sin: and in Eph. ii. 3, Jno. iii. 6 we find an inborn defect leading to actual sin and making needful a new birth. The passage before us is simply a pathetic picture, in the vivid thought of Paul, of a part of his own experience.

That the term *alive* is never elsewhere in the N.T. applied to infants, is no serious objection to the above exposition. For we read very little about their spiritual position. The sacred volume does not gratify our curiosity in this direction. But the term *life* is frequently used to describe those on whom God smiles; and our Lord's reception of little children proves that God smiles on them. Nor is this exposition inconsistent with the probably greater prevalence of sin among the Gentiles than among the Jews. For the Gentiles have the law written in every man's heart. Moreover, the fuller revelation of God to Israel evoked a spiritual life, which finds expression in the Psalms, far above the highest spiritual life of the Gentiles, and which could not but bear fruit in a higher morality.

Verse 5 has now been explained and proved, and the Law has been vindicated. It is merely a weapon with which sin slew Paul. But we do not blame a sword because in the hands of an enemy it has slain the man for whose defence it was made. His death only reveals the strength of the foe who tore it from his grasp and used it for his destruction. Take an illustration. A man is condemned for murder. The law against murder was designed to save his life, by keeping others from killing him. It will now destroy his life. But this is no proof that the law is bad, or that it was enacted by an enemy: it proves only the strength of the evil disposition which, in spite of the law, drove the man to murder and to the gallows. Similarly Paul's case is inexpressibly sad; but the fault is not with the Law, but with sin. Thus, while explaining and justifying *v.* 5, Paul has really cleared the Law from a charge which that verse seemed to bring against it, and his own teaching from the charge of antagonism to the Law of God.

12. So that etc.: result of the foregoing argument. [The particle μέν without δέ following indicates that the sentence is

broken off, like ch. v. 12, and that only a preliminary part of the result is here stated. The remainder we shall find in *v.* 13.] Paul has not actually proved that *the Law* is *holy;* but has shown that *v.* 5 does not imply that it is unholy. **The Law . . . the commandment:** recalling *vv.* 7, 8. **Holy:** cp. ch. i. 2: in definite relation to God and tending to work out His purposes. *Commandment:* the 10th, quoted in *v.* 7. It is a specification of that part of *the Law* which actually slew Paul. He therefore lingers over it, and expounds what is implied in its being *holy*. **Righteous:** in harmony with the essential principles of right and wrong. **Good:** beneficial in its working. Such is whatever is *holy*, i.e. belonging to God. The word *good* sounds so strange to one to whom the Law has been the means of death that at this point Paul breaks off and asks a question which will become a starting-point for other teaching. In the answer to this question, he will state more fully the result of the foregoing argument.

SECTION XXII

THE LAW REVEALS THE BADNESS AND POWER OF SIN

CH. VII. 13—25

The good thing then, did it to me become death? Be it not so. But sin did; in order that it might be seen to be *sin, through the good thing working out for me death, in order that sin might become beyond measure a sinner through the commandment.* [14] *For we know that the Law is spiritual: but I am* a man *of flesh, sold under sin.* [15] *For what I am working out, I do not know: for not what I wish, this I practise, but what I hate, this I do.* [16] *But if what I do not wish, this I do, I agree with the Law that* it is *good.* [17] *And now no longer do I work it out, but sin dwelling in me.* [18] *For I know that there does not dwell in me, that is, in my flesh, a good thing. For to wish is present to me, but to*

work out the good is *not.* [19] *For not what I wish I do, a good thing, but what I do not wish, an evil thing, this I practise.* [20] *But if what I do not wish, this I do, no longer do I work it out, but sin dwelling in me.* [21] *I find therefore* that *to me who wish for the Law, to do the good, that to me the evil is present.* [22] *For I take pleasure with the Law of God according to the inward man:* [23] *but I see another law in the members* of *my* body *carrying on war against the law of my mind and taking me captive to the law of sin which is in the members* of *my* body. [24] *Calamity-stricken man* that *I* am! *who will rescue me from the body of this death?* [25] *Thanks to God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Therefore I myself with the mind serve* the *Law* of *God, but with the flesh a law of sin.*

13. The good thing then etc.: question prompted by the foregoing word *good*, so incongruous to the sad experience just narrated. Paul asks, after asserting that the Law is good, Am I to infer that this *good thing* **has become to me death?** This was so to the man condemned to death under the law against murder: see p. 198. But for himself Paul denies it, and goes on to state the actual case. **But sin:** a subject without a predicate, which must be supplied from the context, followed by a nearer, and then an ultimate, purpose. In these purposes, we find evidently the chief matter of this verse, viz. the purpose for which the Law, *the good thing*, was given. It is true, as Paul stated in *v.* 10, that the Law, which he has just declared to be *good*, had become to him a means of *death.* But this is not the whole case: for in that death there was a further purpose, and this purpose changes completely the whole aspect of the sad calamity which befell Paul. This will appear as the argument proceeds.

The above-described calamity happened **in order that** *sin* **might be seen** to be **sin:** i.e. in order that its real character might be manifested. **Through the good thing, to me working out death:** mode of this manifestation. *Working-out:* bringing about results, as in *v.* 8: so *vv.* 15, 17, 18, 20. **In order that beyond measure etc.:** a further purpose, or further description of the foregoing purpose. The abstract principle of **sin** becomes *beyond measure* **a sinner** by *working out* more and still more deadly consequences. That these are brought about **through the**

commandment, itself *good*, reveals the tremendous and evil power of *sin*. The word *sinner* keeps up the personification of *sin*. Notice its conspicuous prominence in this verse.

We have here another account, in addition to those in chs. iii. 19, v. 20, of the purpose of the Law. Each statement illustrates the others. The Law was a result of Adam's sin, and came in order that it might be multiplied into the many sins of his children, in order that thus the real nature of sin might appear. Consequently Paul's death was due ultimately, not to the Law, but to sin. A still further purpose of the Law is stated in Gal. iii. 24: "that we may be justified by faith." But this is not yet in view.

14. A conspicuous change from past to present. In order to explain a bygone event in his own experience, Paul now describes the constitution of **the Law,** and of himself; and his own bondage to *sin*. Whether *vv.* 14—24, which evidently describe the same experience, describe Paul's state while writing this letter, we will consider later.

We know: as in chs. ii. 2, iii. 19, calling attention to what even Paul's opponents admit. **Spiritual:** as in ch. i. 11: pertaining to the *Spirit* of God, who is frequently contrasted with the *flesh:* see ch. viii. 4—9. *The Law* expresses the mind of the Holy Spirit. Man-**of-flesh,** or *fleshen:* same word in 1 Cor. iii. 1, 2 Cor. iii. 3, Heb. vii. 7, and (LXX.) 2 Chr. xxxii. 8, Ezek. xxxvi. 26. See note under ch. viii. 11. Paul's entire personality was dominated by his material side. **Sold:** recalling a slave-market, and thus giving vividness to the picture. **Under sin:** as in ch. iii. 9: the slave-master in whose power Paul now legally is. Cp. 1 Kgs. xxi. 20, 25, Isa. l. 1. Notice the practical result of being, while *the Law is spiritual*, a man of *flesh*. The flesh is not bad: for it is a creature of God. But it is the lower side of man's nature, where sin erects its throne and whence it rules the man. Consequently one who is under control of his own body is a sold slave of sin. He therefore cannot (ch. viii. 7, 8) obey a law expressing the mind of the Spirit of God, who is utterly adverse (see Gal. v. 17) to the rule of the body. The only possible immediate consequence of the gift of such a law to a man of flesh is a revelation of his bondage. And this inevitable consequence is in *v.* 13 described as the purpose of the sad experience described in *v.* 11.

15—17. Further description of the bondage of the man of flesh. **Work out:** achieve results, as in *v.* 13. Like other servants, Paul does not understand the results he is working out. That

a soldier on the field marches and counter-marches he knows not why, and actually achieves results beyond his thought, proves that he is a servant working out the purposes of another. Just so, all sinners know not what they do: Lk. xxiii. 34. This ignorance Paul accounts for by saying that his action is not determined by, but runs counter to, his own **wish.** This is a mark, not only of service, but of compulsory and distasteful service. Then follows, in *v.* 16, an inference from this distasteful service, viz. that Paul **agrees with the Law** and recognises **that** it is **good**; and in *v.* 17 another inference, viz. that Paul is not the author of his own actions, but that they are *wrought out* by another **dwelling in** him. This stranger who has seized the helm of Paul's ship, he calls **sin.**

18—20. Proof of the correctness of the name just given to the stranger dwelling in Paul, completing the proof that he is (*v.* 14) a sold slave of sin. **I know**: a secret of Paul's own heart: contrast "we know" in *v.* 14. **That is, in my flesh**: limiting the above denial to the outer and material side of his nature. In that side which is nearest to the world around, and through which actions are wrought, there dwells a foreign element; and Paul knows that it is **not good.** The proof is that in him is desire but no realisation. From this he infers that his flesh, the medium through which desire passes into action, is occupied by an enemy. And, since that which he desires and cannot do is **good,** and that which he does not desire yet does is **evil,** he infers with sad certainty that this enemy is **sin.** The words *good* and *evil* in *v.* 19 note the progress in argument since *v.* 15, where Paul merely asserts the contrast between his desires and actions, without any moral judgment on them. After thus identifying the enemy who is the real author of his actions, Paul restates, in *v.* 20, word for word, the inference stated in *v.* 17.

21. Compact summing up of the main statement in *vv.* 15—20.

[The grammatical construction of *v.* 21 is most difficult. The chief difficulty is the construction of *τὸν νόμον.* If we were to leave out these words, we could take *τῷ θέλοντι ἐμοὶ ποιεῖν τὸ καλόν* in apposition to the second *ἐμοί*, thrust forward out of its place in order to emphasise Paul's desire to do good even while evil is present. We could then render, *I find therefore, to me who desire to do the good, that to me the evil is present.* But we must do something with *τὸν νόμον, the Law*, thrust in between *εὑρίσκω* and *τῷ θέλοντι.* This term is, in *vv.* 7, 14, 16, undoubtedly equivalent to *the Law of God* in *vv.* 22, 25: and this is the ordinary meaning

throughout Paul's epistles. It is the meaning at once suggested by the same term in *v.* 21. On the other hand, we read in *v.* 23 of *another law* and of *the law of sin:* but here the new meaning is plainly stated. In *v.* 21, we must retain the ordinary meaning unless we have strong reason to the contrary. Dr. Sanday renders, "I find therefore this law—if it may be so called—this stern necessity laid upon me from without, that much as I wish to do what is good, the evil lies at my door." But he gives no example of any such use of this common term. An easier exposition is to retain its common use, and to take the accusative τὸν νόμον as governed, not by εὑρίσκω foregoing, but by τῷ θέλοντι following, and ποιεῖν τὸ καλόν as epexegetic giving the purpose for which Paul *desires the Law.* Thus interpreted, the accusative is put before the governing verb for emphasis, just as for emphasis τῷ ελοντι ἐμοί is pushed forward. This exposition gives to the term *the Law* its ordinary meaning; and explains its conspicuous insertion here, viz. in order to reassert Paul's desire to obey the Law even while actually breaking it, recalling a similar assertion in *v.* 16 and preparing a way for a stronger assertion in *v.* 22. Elsewhere in N.T. the word θέλω is almost always followed by an infinitive. But an accusative follows it in *vv.* 15, 16, 19, 20: and this conspicuous construction prepares a way for the same in *v.* 21. Cp. 2 Cor. xi. 12: τῶν θελόντων ἀφορμήν.]

I find: by daily experience. **Who wish-for the Law:** whose desires go after God's commands. So *v.* 16, "I agree with the Law:" contrast Isa. v. 24, LXX., "they did not *wish-for the Law* of the Lord." **To do the good:** purpose of Paul's wish for the Law. **To me . . . to me:** emphatic repetition, calling attention to Paul's own sad case. **The evil is present:** he commits sin.

22, 23. Summary of the proofs of the inference compactly stated in *v.* 21. **Take-pleasure-with:** recalling, but rather stronger than, "I-agree-with" in *v.* 16. It personifies **the Law of God** as taking delight in that which is good, and asserts that Paul shares that delight. **The inward man:** the inner and higher element in man which is farthest from the world around. Same words in 2 Cor. iv. 16, for the inner self which in contrast to the perishing body is being renewed day by day; and in Eph. iii. 16, where it is the recipient of the inworking power of God. Compare 1 Pet. iii. 4, "the hidden man of the heart," and Plato, *Republic* p. 589*a*, "when the inner man shall have most control over the man." To this inward side of his being, Paul limits the foregoing assertion: *I take pleasure . . . according to the inward man.* Just

so he limited the assertion in *v.* 18 to his outward and material side.

23. Terrible descriptive exposition of "to me the evil is present" in *v.* 21. **I see**: result of Paul's self-contemplation, parallel to "I find in" *v.* 21. **Another law**: another authority prescribing conduct, and having its seat **in the members of my** body. As in *v.* 5, and ch. vi. 12, sin is here said to have its seat of authority in the body. **Carrying-on-war-against**: vivid picture of inward conflict. **The law of my mind**: the Law of God as apprehended and approved by Paul's own intelligence. Sin puts forth its utmost power in order to overturn in Paul an authority which has gained his highest respect. **Taking me captive**: result of the war which sin is waging within Paul. *Me*: without limitation. Paul's entire personality is captured: his body, through which thought passes into action, is occupied by the enemy; and his mind is prevented from working out its will. **The law of sin**: fuller description of the *other law*. It is justified by the antagonism of this other law to the law of Paul's mind. **Which is in my members**: emphatic repetition of the locality of this alien law which is taking Paul captive.

Such, as he contemplates it, is Paul's awful position. He sees a foe not only in his country and his home but in his own body. The struggle with the invader continues: but resistance is vain. By force the stranger imposes his own laws: and Paul finds himself a prisoner in his own body. He is a slave: his master is his greatest enemy: and his enemy dwells in his own breast.

24. A cry for deliverance, evoked by Paul's view of his awful position. **Calamity-stricken**: as in Rev. iii. 17, cognate word in Rom. iii. 16, Jas. v. 1; frequent in Greek tragedy. It describes not a man's state of mind, but his circumstances. **Body**: recalling *my members* twice in *v.* 23, and in *v.* 5. **Death**: of body and soul, the awful punishment of sin, as in *vv.* 5, 10, 13, ch. vi. 16, 21, 23. The sinner's own body is to him (ch. vi. 6) a body of sin and a body of death. For through its appetites, which control him, it drags him along a path of sin leading to death. Paul cries for deliverance; not from a foe before his eyes, not from a prison of granite or bars of iron, but from his own body, by means of which his enemy compels him to sin and holds him in bondage. But we need not conceive him to desire death: for this would not save him. From the tyranny of his own body, from a life of obedience to (ch. vi. 12) its desires, he cries to be set free. This cry of helpless anguish, even more than the picture of his captivity, reveals his terrible position.

25. The cry is heard. In the moment of deepest darkness, a light shines forth, and sorrow is turned into joy. The cry of anguish is lost in a triumphant and grateful shout of **thanks to God through Jesus Christ**: so ch. i. 8. This implies deliverance, of which we shall hear more in ch. viii. 2.

Therefore etc.: a recapitulating inference from *vv.* 14—24. **I myself**: very emphatic, recalling conspicuously Paul's own personality which has been before us from *v.* 7. Looked at in himself, Paul's allegiance is divided. In his *mind*, which acknowledges the claims and goodness of the Law, Paul bows before the rule of God: in his *flesh*, the medium through which actions are performed, he does the bidding of God's enemy. **With the mind**: recalling Paul's mental agreement with the Law, in *vv.* 16, 21, 22. **With the flesh**: Paul's hands and feet, which actually do the bidding of sin.

REVIEW. Paul asked in *v.* 13 whether, so far as he is concerned, the gift of the Law had been a fatal failure. It would be so, if *vv.* 7—12 were the whole case. But Paul answers his own question with an emphatic negative; and says that his death by means of the Law was itself a divinely-chosen means to reveal the nature of sin. In *vv.* 14—25, we see this purpose accomplished. As we watch Paul struggling helplessly against his foe, and see the foe planting himself in his body and making it a prison, as we hear his cry for deliverance from bondage to his own body, we learn as we never learnt before what sin is. We learn this, not as in *vv.* 7—11 from Paul's sad death by means of the Law, but from the abiding state of bondage which followed his death, i.e. from the continuous working of sin in one whom it has already slain.

This revelation of sin was made by means of the Law. Had there been no Law, whatever men did would have been attributed to their ignorance and folly. It would have been thought that nothing more was needed than divine teaching supported by the thunders of Sinai. This illusion has been dispelled. The thunders of Sinai have uttered their voice; but in vain. Yet not in vain. By evoking the approbation of that in Paul which is noblest, and by prompting vain efforts after obedience, the Law has proved that Paul is a captive in the hands of an enemy against whom there is no rising up. By means of the Law, Paul has learnt that he needs, not merely a guide to show him the way, but a Saviour to rescue him from the grasp of one stronger than himself.

This lesson is all that can come from the gift of (*v.* 14) a law dictated by the Spirit of God to a born slave of sin. We therefore

infer that in order to teach this lesson the Law was given and sin was permitted to use it as a weapon of death. Thus Paul has virtually proved his statement in *v.* 13. Compare carefully Gal. iii. 22—24. Under ch. viii. 4, I shall review briefly the purpose and working of the Law.

Paul has now justified, by an experimental proof of its working, the description of the Law given in *v.* 12. He has proved that it is *good*, not merely in (*v.* 10) its purpose, but in its actual result: for it has evoked from him *thanks to God through Christ.* It has been admitted to be *righteous*, even by the conscience of a man who breaks it: and it is *holy;* for we have seen it working out the purposes of God.

We now ask, do *vv.* 14—25 describe a JUSTIFIED man, or one STILL UNFORGIVEN? The latter view was held by Origen, the earliest Christian commentator, and by the Greek fathers generally: the former, by Augustine and the Latin fathers generally. It was received in the West during the middle ages, and by the Reformers; and has been held in our day by most who have accepted Calvin's teaching on predestination. Among those who reject this teaching, the view of the Greek fathers prevails. It is worthy of note that this is the earlier opinion, and was accepted by nearly all who spoke as their mother-tongue the language in which this epistle was written.

That in *vv.* 14—25 Paul describes his own experience before justification, I hold for the following reasons.

In *vv.* 9—11 we saw a great and sad change take place in Paul, a change from life to death. This change is described in order to explain the condition described in *v.* 5. But in *v.* 6, as in chs. vi. 22, viii. 2, Eph. ii. 5, 6, and elsewhere, we read of a subsequent change, as glorious as the earlier one was sad, wrought in Paul and his readers by the power of God, a transition from bondage to liberty, from death to life. Paul is now dead to sin, set free from its service, and dead to the Law which formerly bound him to a cruel master. The second change must be located between *v.* 13, which gives the purpose of the first change, and ch. viii. 1, 2, which describes the state of those who enjoy the second. And, since *vv.* 14—25 deal evidently with one subject, we must put the second change either between *vv.* 13 and 14 or between *v.* 25 and ch. viii. 1. Now between *vv.* 13 and 14 we have no hint of a change: indeed, *v.* 14 explains *v.* 13, and therefore cannot be separated from it by an event which completely changed Paul's position. But in ch. viii. 1 the change takes place

before our eyes, and is written in characters which no one can misunderstand. The words "made me free from the law of sin" proclaim in clearest language that the bondage of ch. vii. 23, 25 has passed away.

Again, *vv.* 14—25 absolutely contradict all that Paul and the N.T. writers say about themselves and the Christian life. He here calls himself a slave of sin, and groans beneath its bondage, a calamity-stricken man. Contrast this with Gal. ii. 20, "I live, no longer I, but Christ lives in me;" and with 1 Jno. iii. 14, "we know that we are passed out of death into life." If the words before us refer to a justified man, they stand absolutely alone in the entire New Testament.

It has been objected that the language of *vv.* 14—25 is inapplicable to men not yet justified. But we find similar language in the lips of Greek and Roman pagans. Compare Seneca's *Letters* no. 52: "what is it that draws us in one direction while striving to go in another, and impels us towards that which we wish to avoid?" So Euripides, *Hippolytus* l. 379, "we understand and know the good things, but we do not work them out;" and *Medea* l. 1078, "I know what sort of evil things I am going to do, but passion is stronger than my purposes: as it is to mortals a cause of very great evils." Also Xenophon, *Cyropædia* bk. vi. 1. 41: "I have evidently two souls . . . for if I had only one, it would not be at the same time good and bad; nor would it desire at the same time both honourable and dishonourable works, nor would it at the same time both wish and not wish to do the same things. But it is evident that there are two souls; and that when the good one is in power the honourable things are practised; but, when the bad, the dishonourable things are attempted." So Ovid, *Metamorphoses* xvii. 17: "I desire one thing; the mind persuades another: I see and approve better things; I follow worse things." These passages do not mention the Law of God, and therefore differ greatly from the verses before us. But they prove that, apart from the historic revelations to Israel and in Christ, men were sometimes carried along, against their better judgment, to do bad things; and thus prove that, apart from the pardon of sins announced by Christ, there is in man an inward man which approves that which the Law commands.

What Paul says elsewhere about his religious state before his conversion confirms the description of himself here given. He was a man of blameless morality, zealous for God, a Pharisee of the strictest sect, in ignorance persecuting the Church: Ph. iii. 6,

Acts xxii. 3, xxvi. 5, 1 Tim. i. 13. Of such a man we have a picture here. Paul's conscience approves the Law: he makes every effort to keep it; but his efforts only prove his moral powerlessness, and reveal the presence of an enemy in whose firm grasp he lies: he seeks to conquer inward failure by strict outward observance, and perhaps by bloody loyalty to what he considers to be the honour of God. In the conscientious Pharisee, we have a man who desires to do right but actually does wrong. And the more earnestly a man strives to obtain the favour of God by doing right, the more painfully conscious will he be of his failure. Thus the harmony of this passage with the character of Paul is no small mark of the genuineness of this epistle. At the same time it describes more or less correctly all sinners, except perhaps some in whom long bondage to sin has almost destroyed the better principle.

That these verses describe the experience of many justified persons is no proof or presumption that they describe Paul's experience while writing this letter. If our present state corresponds with that portrayed here, this only proves that in us, as in the men referred to in 1 Cor. iii. 1—4, the change is not complete. On the other hand, there are thousands who with deep gratitude recognise that *vv.* 14—25, while describing their past, by no means describe their present, state. Day by day they are more than conquerors through Him that loved them. And, though their experience be of little weight to others, it is to themselves an absolute proof that these words do not refer to Paul's state while writing the epistle. For they are quite sure that what they enjoy the great apostle enjoyed in far higher degree.

Then why did Paul puzzle plain people by using a present tense to describe a past experience? This question may be answered by attempting to rewrite this paragraph in the past tense: "I was a man of flesh, sold under sin. I did not know what I was doing. I hated my own actions. I saw another law in the members of my body carrying on war against the law of my mind. I cried, Calamity-stricken one, who shall rescue me?" The life and strength of the paragraph are gone. To realise past calamity, we must leave out of sight our deliverance from it. The language of *vv.* 9, 11 made this easy. Paul's description of his murder by the hand of sin was so real and sad that he forgot for the moment the life which followed it. When therefore he came to describe the state in which that murder placed him, it was easy to use the present tense. Hence the transition from the past tense in *v.* 11 describing the event of death to the present in *v.* 14 describing

the abiding state of the murdered one. Similarly, in ch. iii. 7 Paul throws himself into the position of one guilty of falsehood, and sets up for himself an excuse. In ch. iv. 24, he stands by the writer of Genesis and looks forward to the justification of himself and his readers as still future. In ch. v. 1, he urges them to claim peace with God through justification. In *v.* 14, after contemplating the reign of death from Adam to Moses, he looks forward to the future incarnation of Christ. In ch. vi. 5, he speaks in the same way of the resurrection life in Christ. We shall also find him, in ch. viii. 30, throwing himself into the far future and looking back upon the nearer future as already past.

The past and present tenses are distinguished, not only in time, but as different modes of viewing an action. The past tense looks upon it as already complete; the present, as going on before our eyes. Consequently, when the time is otherwise determined, the tenses may be used without reference to time. In the case before us, the entire context, foregoing and following, tells plainly to what time Paul refers. He is therefore at liberty to use that tense which enables him to paint most vividly the picture before him. This mode of speech, common to all languages, is a conspicuous feature of the language in which this epistle was written. So Kuehner, *Greek Grammar* § 382. 2: "In the narration of past events the present is frequently used, especially in principal sentences, but not unfrequently in subordinate sentences, while in the vividness of the representation the past is looked upon as present. This use of the present is also common to all languages. But in the Greek language it is specially frequent; and in the language of poetry appears not merely in narration but also in vivid questions and otherwise, frequently in a startling manner."

It has been suggested that we have here a description of one who has only partly appropriated by faith the salvation offered by Christ. Every defective experience (and whose experience is not defective?) has elements in common with that of those without Christ. Consequently the language of *vv.* 14—25 is appropriate to many who have a measure of saving faith. But we have here no hint of any salvation received by faith in Christ. It is therefore better to understand it as referring to a man not yet justified.

If the above exposition be correct, we have here the fullest description in the Bible of man unsaved. Even in the immoral there is an inner man which in some measure approves the good

and hates the bad. But this inner man is powerless against the enemy who is master of his body, and who thus dictates his conduct. In spite of his better self, the man is carried along a path of sin. This is not contradicted, nor is its force lessened, by Paul's admission in ch. ii. 26, 27 that even pagans do sometimes what the Law commands. For their obedience is only occasional and imperfect; whereas the Law requires constant and complete obedience. A man who breaks the laws of his country is not saved from punishment by occasional performance of noble actions. Although men unforgiven sometimes do that which deserves approbation, they are utterly powerless to rescue themselves from the power of sin and to obtain by good works the favour of God.

CHAPTER VII. reconciles the teaching of ch. vi. with the divine authority of the Law. Verses 1—6 prove that our complete deliverance from sin, asserted in ch. vi. 22, is in harmony with the essence of law: for the death of Christ puts us beyond the limits affixed by the Law to its own domain. Verses 7—12 prove that, though salvation is possible only through deliverance from the Law, yet the Law is not bad: for it is only a passive instrument through which sin slays its victims. And from *vv.* 13—25 we have now learnt that, although its immediate effect was death, yet the Law has not failed in its purpose of life: for our death by its means has made known to us the power of our adversary, and has driven us to One who is able to save.

Man's relation to the Law is now sufficiently expounded, and the Law sufficiently vindicated. It remains only to describe the new life with which, in Christ Jesus, the Spirit of life makes free the adopted children of God.

SECTION XXIII

THE SPIRIT AND THE FLESH

CH. VIII. 1—11

Therefore now no condemnation to those in Christ Jesus. [2] *For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free*

from the law of sin and of death. [3] *For, what the Law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God, by sending His own Son in* the *likeness of* the *flesh of sin, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh;* [4] *in order that the decree of the Law may be fulfilled in us who walk not according to flesh but according to Spirit.*

[5] *For they that are according to flesh mind the things of the flesh; but they according to Spirit, the things of the Spirit.* [6] *For the mind of the flesh* is *death: but the mind of the Spirit* is *life and peace.* [7] *Because the mind of the flesh* is *enmity towards God. For to the Law of God it does not submit: for neither can it.* [8] *Moreover, they that are in* the *flesh cannot please God.* [9] *But ye are not in* the *flesh but in* the *Spirit; if, as I assume,* the *Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone has not* the *Spirit of Christ, that* man *is not His.* [10] *But if Christ* be *in you, the body* is *dead because of sin, but the spirit* is *life because of righteousness.* [11] *But if the Spirit of Him that raised Jesus from* the *dead dwells in you, He that raised Christ Jesus from* the *dead will make alive also your mortal bodies because of His Spirit dwelling in you.*

1. Inference from the summary just given of *vv.* 14—25. **Now:** changed circumstances, involving a change of time: so chs. vi. 22, vii. 6. **No condemnation:** no adverse sentence of God, like that in ch. iii. 9. **Those in Christ Jesus:** they to whom the personality of Christ is the environment of life and action; a conception ever present to the thought of Paul: see under ch. vi. 11; cp. ch. xvi. 7, 1 Cor. i. 30, 2 Cor. v. 17. In former days, although Paul's mind paid allegiance to the Law of God, his hands and feet did the bidding of sin. From this he now draws the unexpected inference that they who are in Christ are no longer condemned by God for their sins. This general inference implies that the foregoing experience is, though doubtless in different degrees, common to all Christians.

2. Explanation and proof of *v.* 1. **The Spirit:** new and conspicuous feature of ch. viii. The close argument following implies that *the Spirit* **of life** here is the same as the Spirit of God and of Christ in *vv.* 9, 11, 14: and this can be no other than the Holy Spirit in ch. v. 5. He is the Spirit *of life:* for all

life springs from Him. **The law of** *the Spirit:* the Holy Spirit, looked upon as prescribing conduct. This phrase is another mark of Paul's legal mode of thought: cp. ch. iii. 27, "a law of faith." **The law of sin:** the principle of evil looked upon as prescribing action: so ch. vii. 23, 25. *Sin* **and death** are partners of one throne, and issue one *law:* to obey sin, is to walk in a path marked out by death. **Made-free:** as in ch. vi. 18, 22. The Holy Spirit, by prescribing a new course of action, liberates us from the bondage involved in the former compulsory obedience to the dictates of evil leading to death. Just so a conqueror, by setting up his own laws in a conquered country, makes the former laws invalid. That the country obeys the new law, is a proof of conquest. The presence and guidance of the Spirit have made Paul free from the rule of sin. This is not change of bondage, but freedom from all bondage. For the law of the Spirit is the will of our Maker, and therefore the law of our being. To obey it, is the only true freedom. **In Christ Jesus:** as in *v.* 1, giving the point of the argument. If *in Christ* Paul has been made free from the dominion of sin, there is *no condemnation to those in Christ.* For their liberation proves that they are forgiven. Cp. ch. iii. 24: "redemption in Christ Jesus."

Instead of *made* **me** *free* in the Alex. and Ephraim and Clermont MSS. and some early versions, the Sinai and Vatican MSS. and the Peshito Syriac version read *made* **thee** *free.* This latter reading is given by Tischendorf, in the text of Westcott, and in the margins of Lachmann and Tregelles, who however give the other reading in their texts, as does Westcott in his margin. It should have been noted by the Revisers. But the difference, merely one letter, is unimportant. Either reading may easily be explained as an error. Paul's references to himself throughout ch. vii. 7—25 might prompt a copyist to change *thee* into *me.* And the same letters at the end of the foregoing word [ἠλευθέρωσέ σε] would account easily for the opposite change. The difference in meaning is small. Paul supports the general statement in *v.* 1 by personal experience; in the one case of himself, in the other of his reader, whom as in ch. ii. 1 he singles out and appeals to as an individual. The former seems more natural, and this may perhaps outweigh the authority of our two best copies.

Notice here a definite experience of inward liberation. Paul remembers the time when, in spite of his better judgment, he did the bidding of sin: he now does the bidding of the Spirit

of God, but is free only while following His guidance. He therefore infers that the guidance of the Spirit has made him free. His liberation came through Christ's death; and he enjoys it to-day by resting on Christ. It is therefore God's gift, and a proof of His forgiveness. Just so a prisoner, whose doors have been opened by the king's command, has in his past imprisonment and present freedom a proof of pardon; whereas the freedom of a law-breaker who has never been arrested is no such proof. There are thousands to-day to whom every doubt about their present salvation is banished by a remembrance of their former bondage to sin and fruitless efforts to do right. Since Paul's liberation took place in Christ, he has a right to infer that all who are in Christ have been set free and are therefore no longer condemned. Thus the Law, by making us conscious of our bondage, not only drives us to Christ, but furnishes, to those who believe, an abiding proof of God's favour.

This verse is complete proof that ch. vii. 14—25 does not describe Paul's experience while writing. For no man can be at the same time *made free from the law of sin* and (*v.* 23) taken *captive to the law of sin.*

3, 4. Explanation of the foregoing liberation. **What the Law . . . through the flesh:** comment on the statement following. *The Law:* of Moses, as always when not otherwise defined. **Weak:** powerless to save; because, *through* our *flesh* being controlled by a hostile power, we were unable to obey it. Just so a rope is powerless to save a drowning man who has not strength to grasp it; whereas even such might be saved by the living arms of a strong man. If the flesh could do what the mind approves, the Law would be able, by revealing the badness of the rule of sin, to dethrone it, and thus save us. But the flesh cannot drive out its dread inhabitant. Consequently, *the Law*, which cannot breathe new strength into the flesh, but only knowledge into the mind, is too *weak* to save us. To save under such circumstances is **the inability** *of the Law*, i.e. something it *cannot* do.

His own Son: similar phrase in *v.* 32: see under ch. i. 3. **Flesh of sin:** the material of our bodies, in which sin has set up its throne and which in this sense belongs to sin: so "body of sin" in ch. vi. 6. **Likeness:** as in ch. i. 23, v. 14, vi. 5. The material of Christ's body was *like* that of our bodies which are controlled by sin. This proves that the word **sending** refers to Christ's birth. **God** *sent His own Son*, though sinless, clothed

in flesh like that in which sin dwells. This implies His existence before His birth as, even then, God's own Son: cp. Ph. ii. 7, 1 Jno. iv. 9. **For sin**: purpose of the mission of the Son: cp. Gal. i. 4, 1 Jno. ii. 2. It had reference to sin. The same words are used in reference to sacrifices in Lev. iv. 3, 14, Heb. x. 8, 18, 26: but they are so general that we need not infer any such reference here. **Condemned sin**: proclaimed its doom. Since sin has been represented as a ruler, its doom must be dethronement. **In the flesh**: locality of this proclamation. *By sending His own Son* in a body like that in which sin had set up its throne, and with special reference to sin, *God* proclaimed in the midst of the empire of sin that that empire will be overthrown. When we see the king's son enter the revolted province without opposition, and know that he has come because of the revolt, we are sure that the king is both able and determined to put down the revolt. The presence of the king's son proclaims the usurper's coming dethronement.

4. Definite moral purpose of the coming of Christ. **The decree of the Law**: its various prescriptions of conduct, looked at as one whole: cp. chs. ii. 26, i. 32. **Fulfilled**: as in ch. xiii. 8; cp. ch. ii. 27. Since the Law was designed to mould our conduct, its purpose is accomplished when it is obeyed. *Fulfilled* **in us**: better than "that we may fulfil." For every act of obedience is God's work in us, and gift to us; and is an accomplishment of the divine purpose for which Christ became Man. **Who walk etc.**: those in whom, and the condition on which, the Law will be fulfilled. **According to flesh**: allowing the indolence or appetites of the body to mark out our path. To do this, is to obey sin which dwells in the flesh. **According to Spirit**: following the guidance of the Spirit of God. This exposition is clearly implied in *v.* 9, and in *vv.* 13, 14. God sent His Son to dwell in human flesh in order that the Spirit of God, and no longer the flesh, may direct our steps; and that thus the purpose of the Law may be achieved in us. And, that its purpose is thus accomplished in us, is a proof that we have been set free from the rule of sin, and therefore are no longer condemned.

Paul's exposition of the purpose and working of the Law is now complete: see chs. iii. 19, v. 20, vii. 13. To men guilty of actual sin, and held fast by sin, God gave a righteous law. Because it was the will of our Maker, it commended itself to our moral judgment, and evoked efforts after obedience. These efforts failed utterly: and their failure proved that we are powerless to accomplish our own moral purposes, that we are in the grasp of an

evil and hostile power. This inevitable result of the gift of such a law to such persons must have been its purpose. We infer therefore that the Law was given in order to reveal our hopeless bondage. Again, believers now actually fulfil the Law which they once vainly tried to obey. This proves that they have been set free from their mighty adversary, and that a mightier has taken up His abode within them. For they have been set free, not from without, but from within. That their deliverer prompts and enables them to fulfil the Law, proves Him to be the Spirit of God. He is God's gift to them; and His presence is therefore a proof of pardon. Thus in them is attained the life-giving purpose of the ancient Law. For, by revealing the uselessness of their own efforts, it has led them to Christ, and taught them the worth of His salvation: and, by revealing the presence and power of their foe, it also reveals the presence and greater power of the Spirit of God, and thus affords constant proof that their condemnation is removed.

That the Holy Spirit, given to those who believe the words of Christ, prompts and enables them to obey the words of Moses and the prophets, is another harmony of the Old and New; and therefore confirms the divine origin of both. Moreover, that Christ came in order that the Law may be fulfilled in us in a life guided by the Spirit, attests the importance and eternal validity of the Law.

That the new life which Christ came to impart is wrought in us by the Spirit of God, is the FIFTH and last FUNDAMENTAL DOCTRINE of this epistle. We find it in ch. v. 5: it is developed in chs. viii. 2—16, 23, 26, 27, ix. 1, xiv. 17, xv. 13, 16, 19. It is assumed again and again by Paul throughout his epistles: e.g. 1 Cor. iii. 16, vi. 19, xii. 3, 7, 2 Cor. iii. 8, Gal. iii. 14, iv. 6, v. 16—18, Eph. i. 13, iv. 30; cp. 1 Pet. i. 2, iv. 14. The same doctrine is taught in 1 Jno. iii. 24, iv. 13; and is attributed to Christ in Jno. vii. 39, xiv. 16; Mt. x. 20, Mk. xiii. 11, Lk. xi. 13, xii. 12. We therefore cannot doubt that it was actually taught by Him. Notice also that the universal gift of the Spirit was foretold in Joel ii. 28, 29; that Ezekiel (ch. xxxvi. 27) announced that He will lead those in whom He dwells to obey the Law; and that Jeremiah (ch. xxxi. 33) foretold that God will write His Law in His people's hearts.

Doctrine 5, Sanctification through the Spirit, greatly helps us to exercise the faith required in Doctrine 4, Sanctification through Faith. When God bids us reckon ourselves dead to sin and henceforth living only for Him, we remember our moral weakness and

say, How can these things be? But when we learn that henceforth the Spirit of God will dwell within us in order that by His power He may save us from all sin and by His holiness direct towards God our every purpose and effort, our doubt gives place to confident expectation and adoring gratitude. For we are sure that the Spirit is able to accomplish, even in us, God's purpose of holiness.

5—8. Further exposition of the two courses just described, affording abundant reason for the divine purpose just stated. **They that are according to flesh**: they whose moral nature is controlled by the needs and desires of the body. **The things of the flesh**: objects which the body desires or turns from. These, they **mind,** i.e. make them objects of thought and effort: same word in Mt. xvi. 23, Ph. iii. 19, Rom. xi. 20, xii. 3, 16, xiv. 6, xv. 5. They whose moral nature is determined by the flesh think about and pursue what the flesh (cp. ch. vi. 12) desires. Conversely, **they according to** the **Spirit.**

6. Contrasted results of following the two paths now before us. **The flesh** is personified as one whose **mind,** i.e. purpose and effort, is to kill. In the body of the unsaved, sin erects (ch. vi. 12) its throne; and through its needs and desires, these arising from *the flesh*, the bodily constitution common to all men, rules the whole man. The inevitable result of this rule is **death,** i.e. (as in ch. vi. 21, 23) utter ruin of body and spirit. This inevitable result, Paul here represents as the purpose of the flesh. They whose thought is dominated by their bodily life are working out their own destruction. So Gal. vi. 8: "he that sows for his own flesh shall from the flesh reap corruption." **Life**: as in ch. vi. 23. **Peace**: as in ch. i. 7. *Life and peace* are objects at which the Spirit ever aims: for He is (*v.* 2) *the Spirit of Life.* God sent His Son into the world in order that we might no longer follow a path leading inevitably to death, but pursue another path leading to life and peace. Similar contrast in Mt. vii. 13, 14: "the way leading to destruction . . . to life."

7. Reason why **the mind of the flesh** is death, viz. **because** it is essentially **hostility towards God.** This strong statement is at once explained. **The Law of God**: as in ch. vii. 22. This full title reminds us that the Law is supported by divine authority. To this authority, the flesh **does not submit**: and this statement is explained and strengthened by another, **for neither can it.** The bodily constitution common to all men, and in great part to animals, desires objects without considering whether God

permits them. Our appetites distinguish pleasant and unpleasant, but not right and wrong. They therefore often prompt us to break the Law: and to do so is to declare war against the King. Consequently the flesh is necessarily hostile to God: to let the body rule, is to do what God forbids. The reason of this is given in ch. vii. 23. The flesh is, in the unsaved, ruled by sin. Consequently, to obey the flesh, is to obey its awful lord, sin; and is therefore essential hostility to God. But this animating principle of the flesh is left out of sight here, to remind us that they who, perhaps without thought of sin, follow the guidance of the body are working out the will of one whose only purpose is to fight against God. Such war must, as stated in *v.* 6, end in death.

8. An additional statement completing the proof of *v.* 6*a*. **In flesh:** as in ch. vii. 5. To the unsaved, bodily life not only, as in *v.* 4, marks out their path but is the moral element *in* which they are and move. They see and hear only through the eyes and ears of the body, and all they have and are depends on the body. They are therefore at its mercy; at the mercy of that which we have seen to be hostile to God. Such men **cannot please God.** They can neither obtain nor retain His favour This does not contradict the important statement in ch. ii. 26, 27 For occasional obedience cannot save from punishment for the sins of which (cp. ch. iii. 9, 23) all are guilty. Indeed, by raising their moral tone, it rather reveals how far even the best fall short of what God requires.

This verse asserts (cp. Eph. ii. 3) the universal moral helplessness of men. For, in order to please God, we need to be rescued from the dominion of our own bodies.

9—11. After describing in *vv.* 7, 8 "the mind of the flesh," Paul now turns round suddenly to describe the lot of those who follow the Spirit: **but ye are not in flesh but in Spirit.** Your moral environment is not *flesh* with its needs and desires, but *Spirit*, viz. the **Spirit of God. If, as I assume:** εἴπερ: a condition which Paul takes for granted. **Dwells in you:** a blessed contrast to ch. vii. 17, 18, 20. *If* the *Spirit of God* makes His home *in you*, then *are ye in* the *Spirit*. For His presence in us reveals to us, and lifts us into, a new world. **But if anyone etc.:** solemn statement of another possibility. It expounds what is involved in the particle rendered *if*, *as I assume*. Evidently the *Spirit of God* is also **the Spirit of Christ.** This implies that the one Spirit is in essential relation to both the Father and the

Son. It also implies that the Holy Spirit is the only medium of union with Christ. For Paul here asserts that they only are Christ's in whom dwells the Spirit of Christ. And this implies that all the justified have the Holy Spirit; as was assumed in ch. v. 5. Yet we do not become Christ's by receiving the Spirit, but (ch. iii. 22) by faith. We are then (Gal. iii. 26) sons of God; and, because of this, the Spirit of the Son (ch. iv. 6) is sent into our hearts.

10. Further description of the happy lot of those in whom the Spirit of God dwells, in contrast to the case just stated. **Christ in you**: evidently equivalent to the "Spirit of God dwells in you" in *v.* 9: see *v.* 11. For the Spirit of Christ and of God is the Bearer of the presence of Christ and God. Cp. Gal. ii. 20, "Christ lives in me." **The body dead**: as being already doomed to the grave, and its actual death being only a question of time. **Because of sin**: viz. of Adam: see ch. v. 12. **The spirit**: the human spirit, as in ch. i. 9, the highest side of man's nature, in contrast to *the body* in which it dwells. This contrast differs from that in *vv.* 4, 5, 6, 9, where the "flesh" common to all men is set over against the one "Spirit" of God given to all who believe in Christ. **Life**: stronger than "alive." **Because of righteousness**: received by faith: cp. ch. v. 21, "that grace may reign through righteousness for life eternal." *Because of* Adam's *sin*, *the body* of those in whom Christ dwells is *dead*, i.e. a prey of worms and corruption; *but*, *because of* the *righteousness* which is through Christ and through faith, *the spirit* which animates that mortal body possesses undying *life*.

11. Still further description of their happy lot. Even the body will be rescued. **Of Him that raised Jesus**: a close parallel to ch. iv. 24. Paul remembers that the Spirit who **dwells** in all who put faith in Christ is the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus, and therefore a bearer of His infinite power. Notice the emphatic repetition of this important point. That God **raised Christ**, is a pledge that He will raise us. **Make-alive**: as in ch. iv. 17. **Your mortal bodies**: as in ch. vi. 12, but with a different reference, there to the immoral influence of a side of our nature not yet rescued, here to the final rescue even of this lower side of us.

Between the readings **by means of His Spirit** and **because of** *His Spirit*, the oldest and best documents are almost equally divided, as are modern editors. The former is found in the Sinai, Alexandrian, and Ephraim MSS., and in four very ancient versions; and was read by Clement of Alexandria, by Hippolytus probably,

and by many fathers: the latter is in the Vatican and Clermont MSS., and in the Latin and Peshito Syriac versions; and was read probably by Irenæus and Tertullian, and almost certainly by Origen. Athanasius gives us to understand that in his day the reading *by means of His Spirit* was found "in all the ancient copies," but that it was nevertheless disputed.

In cases like this, where the best documents are equally divided, critics usually decide according as one or other reading seems most agreeable to the mind of Paul and at the same time most likely to be altered by a copyist. But here even these internal reasons afford no safe ground for decision. The former reading would teach that the Holy Spirit is the Agent of the resurrection of the body. This is not elsewhere taught in the New Testament; but is in harmony with the nature and work of the Spirit. The other reading teaches that, because the body of the dead was a dwelling-place of the Spirit of God and therefore sacred, God will raise it from the corruption of the grave: a thought in full harmony with the teaching of Paul.

This evenly-balanced evidence, external and internal, leaves the true reading quite uncertain. This uncertainty is reflected in the judgment of the Critical Editors. The reading *by means of* is given in Tischendorf's latest edition and in the texts of Westcott and the Revisers: the reading *because of*, in that of Tregelles, in the 7th edition of Tischendorf, and in the margins of Westcott and the Revisers.

Verse 11 completes the triumph of those rescued from the dominion of sin. Even the bodies in which the Spirit dwelt are sacred, and will be (see *v.* 23) redeemed from corruption. It is true that lips which have spoken His words will be silent in death, that hands which He moved to works of mercy will moulder into dust. They will die because our father sinned. But the triumph of death will be short. Even the mortal clay which has been the organ of the Spirit will live for ever. For the Hand which raised Christ will raise them.

This verse implies that the risen bodies of the saved will bear a definite relation to the bodies laid in the grave. But that they are by no means identical, is taught plainly in 1 Cor. xv. 43, 44, 50, Ph. iii. 21. This warns us not to infer, or to charge Paul with teaching, that our future and present bodies will consist of the same particles. And such collecting of dispersed atoms would be utterly meaningless. But Paul asserts clearly that the victory gained by death will, in the servants of Christ, be triumphantly

reversed by the power which raised Christ from the grave and raised Him to heaven.

The new feature in Rom. viii. 1—11 is the Spirit of God. In ch. vii. 14—25, the conflict was between the Law, approved by the mind, and sin dwelling in the body; and the result was disastrous defeat and hopeless captivity. But now the Spirit has taken the field; and, by setting up His own rule, has made Paul free from the rule of sin and the tyranny of his own body. His spirit is already made alive by contact with the Spirit of life: and the liberation of his dying body, already rescued from the control of sin, is only a question of time.

FLESH. The immoral influence attributed by Paul to the body gives to this word in his writings special significance.

Flesh is the soft solid material of living or once-living bodies. So "flesh and bones" in Lk. xxiv. 39; "flesh and blood" in Mt. xvi. 17, Jno. vi. 51—56, 1 Cor. xv. 50, Gal. i. 16, Eph. vi. 12, Heb. ii. 14. Since bones and blood are out of sight, the word *flesh* denotes frequently the entire material of the body. The flesh is the living matter common to all men: the body is the one organized portion of it belonging to each individual and consisting of mutually-essential members. Since all life is robed in flesh, to be alive on earth is to "live in the flesh:" Gal. ii. 20, Ph. i. 22, 24. The flesh is contrasted with the mind, the heart, and more frequently with the spirit: Rom. vii. 25; ii. 28; i. 4, Mt. xxvi. 41, 1 Cor. v. 5, Col. ii. 5. Since a similar bodily material, though in a different outward form, is possessed by animals, the word *flesh* is also applied to them: 1 Cor. xv. 39, Rev. xix. 18, Isa. xxxi. 3.

Since human and animal life are never found except robed in corresponding flesh, this word denotes frequently, especially in O.T., the entire man and the entire race: so Pss. lvi. 4, lxv. 2, lxxviii. 39, Isa. xxxi. 3, xl. 5, xlix. 26, etc.; Mt. xvi. 17, Lk. iii. 6, Acts ii. 17, Rom. iii. 20, xi. 14, Gal. i. 16, 1 Pet. i. 24. This use of the word is the more appropriate because the sensations and state of the spirit within are determined, and the power of the spirit is limited, by its material clothing. Where the body is, the man is: what the man does, he does through the body: whatever is done to the body, is done to the man. All that we see of the man, is flesh. We therefore speak of him as flesh.

Paul teaches frequently that the body exerts on the spirit an all-important and immoral influence. It has desires and actions: Rom. vi. 12, viii. 13. In it sin dwells and reigns; and to obey its

desires is to submit to the rule of sin: ch. vi. 12. In our body the emotions of sin were once at work; and there sin promulgates its law and fights against the mind: ch. vii. 5, 23. Hence the body of the unsaved is a body of sin; and from the tyranny of this body Paul cries to be set free: chs. vi. 6, vii. 24. Through the death of Christ, our body of sin is practically dead: ch. vi. 6.

This teaching prepares us for the moral significance of the flesh. The influence of the body arises from its needs and desires and dislikes, which ever prompt us to pursue the objects needful for the existence and comfort of the body and to avoid their opposites. Now these needs etc. are common, in different degrees, to all men, and to some extent to animals. We therefore cannot but think of them as inherent to flesh, as "desires of the flesh:" Gal. v. 16, 24. And these desires, found wherever we find a similar material organization, give unity to the idea of flesh.

That Paul speaks, e.g. Rom. vi. 12, vii. 5, 23, Gal. v. 16—19, of the body as a dwelling-place of sin and of the desires and works of the flesh as bad, implies that all men are by nature fallen. Through these desires, evil rules all except those whom God has rescued. We cannot distinguish the influence of the flesh from the influence exerted through the flesh by the principle of sin. Hence sin may be looked upon as the animating principle of the flesh. This one spirit of evil in the many bodies of the unsaved gives additional unity to the idea of flesh. And since the influence of the flesh is always in the same direction, we may look upon it as cherishing always the one purpose of death: Rom. viii. 6.

Many of the objects desired or disliked by the flesh can be obtained or avoided only by first obtaining other objects. Frequently all our mental and bodily powers are at work to get that which will preserve or indulge the body: e.g. intelligent efforts to make money, prompted by desire for bodily gratification. Probably all sin has a similar ultimate origin. Hence, in Gal. v. 19, "the works of the flesh" include every kind of sin. Since the body desires objects merely for its own preservation and gratification, the desires of the body are essentially selfish. Consequently, indulgence of them puts us in opposition to our fellows; and "jealousy and strife" are (1 Cor. iii. 1—4) constant results of a life according to flesh.

Those in Christ are, by the death of Christ, set free from the rule of the body. To them therefore, crucified with Christ, the body of sin has lost its power: Rom. vi. 6. They are no longer "in the flesh:" chs. vii. 5, viii. 9. In other words, they stand

now in a new relation to their own bodies. Formerly the body was the world in which they lived. Beyond the range of its vision they saw nothing: upon its life and welfare their happiness depended. But now the Spirit of God dwelling within them has made them citizens of a world independent of the body. They no longer see only through eyes of flesh, or lean upon an arm of flesh. Therefore, although physically (Gal. ii. 20) they are still in the flesh, morally they are no longer so.

We have seen the contrast of flesh and spirit. But when the word *flesh* denotes the one living material common to all men and includes the one animating principle of evil, it requires a nobler contrast. This is found in the one Spirit of God, who dwells in the heart, enlightens the mind, and strengthens the spirit of all believers, who is the one soul of their many souls, and who stands in absolute antagonism to the flesh. So Rom. viii. 4—13, Gal. v. 16—25. Through the body sin seeks to enslave and corrupt our spirit. The Spirit of God rescues us from this slavery, becomes the soul of our soul, and, acting upon us through our spirit which He enlightens and strengthens, makes our body to be a living temple in which our freed spirit offers ceaseless sacrifice to God.

The immoral influence of the flesh underlies Jno. iii. 6, 1 Jno. ii. 16. Otherwise it is peculiar to Paul.

We therefore understand the flesh to be that material clothing of the spirit which is common to all men, in which alone the human spirit dwells on earth, which in the unsaved is under the control of sin, and which exerts or tends to exert upon the spirits of all men an influence always opposed to God. The moral use of the word *flesh* is not so much a new meaning as a result of a deeper view of the nature, position, and influence, of that which the word commonly denotes.

SECTION XXIV

THE GUIDANCE OF THE SPIRIT IS A PROOF OF COMING GLORY

CH. VIII. 12—17

Therefore, brethren, we are debtors—not to the flesh, to live according to flesh. [13] *For if ye are living according to flesh, ye will die: but if by* the *Spirit ye are putting to death the actions of the body, ye will live.* [14] *For, so many as are led by* the *Spirit of God, these are sons of God.* [15] *For ye did not receive a spirit of bondage, again for fear; but ye received a Spirit of adoption, in which we cry, Abba, Father.* [16] *The Spirit itself bears joint-witness with our spirit that we are children of God.* [17] *But if children, also heirs, heirs of God and joint-heirs of Christ; if, as I assume, we suffer together, in order that we may also be glorified together.*

By a practical application in *v.* 12 and a proof in *vv.* 13—17 of the statement in *vv.* 10, 11, Paul will now complete his comparison of a life according to flesh with one according to Spirit. We are bound to the latter because it is a pledge of coming glory.

12. Practical inference from *vv.* 10, 11. "If Christ's presence in us be a proof that our spirit is alive, and if God will raise the bodies of those in whom His Spirit dwells, then are we bound etc." **Debtors**: as in chs. i. 14, xiii. 7, 8, xv. 27, and especially Gal. v. 3. Compare the words *owe* and *ought*. **Not to the flesh**: opposite course, to which we are under no obligation whatever. The contrast adds force to the exhortation: cp. ch. vi. 17. **To live according to flesh**: to mind the things of the flesh, to walk according to flesh, to do the actions of the body, in *vv.* 5, 4, 13. This is the debt which the flesh claims but which we are not bound to pay.

13. Instead of saying what we are bound to do, Paul breaks off the sentence to give a reason why we must not live according to flesh. Similarly, in chs. v. 12, vii. 12. The reason given is a summary of *vv.* 6—8. **Ye will die**: as in *v.* 6, vii. 24, 13, 9, vi. 21, 23. **But if by the Spirit etc.**: the course we are bound

to pursue. It takes the place of the contrast broken off in *v.* 12. *By* the *Spirit:* by the help of the Holy Spirit: so Gal. v. 5, 16, 18, 25. **Actions**: not separate acts, but courses of action: only in ch. xii. 4, Col. iii. 9, Mt. xvi. 27, Lk. xxiii. 51, Acts xix. 18. For a list, see Col. iii. 5—8. *Actions* **of the body**: such as supply the need, or gratify the desires, of the body, or have this as their ultimate aim. *Body:* rather than "flesh:" for the actions were performed by our individual body. They are different in different men. **Are-putting-to-death**: a bold personification: a close parallel in Col. iii. 5. Experience proves that our past actions, especially often-repeated actions, are a living power in us to-day, urging us on in the path we trod yesterday. This present power of bygone thoughts, words, actions, we call habit. To destroy it, is to *put to death the actions of the body*. The present tense implies that the destruction is going on day by day; and therefore implies that the evil influence of their past conduct continues even in the justified. It is gradually destroyed, as it was gradually formed, by single acts. Every act of an opposite kind weakens, and so far tends to kill, the influence of our past life.

We have here Paul's first reference to a gradual development of the new life: cp. Col. iii. 10. Hitherto he has spoken only of changes which have, or ought to have, already taken place. But the destruction of habits is gradual. Our body is already dead, in the sense that through the death of Christ its subjection to sin, and its rule over us, have ceased. But the actions of the body, i.e. the habits of our former life, still strive to regain for the body which begot them its lost dominion. The increasing weakness of these habits is a measure of spiritual growth.

Notice the double contrast. A life according to flesh is the way to death: to put to death the actions of the body is a pledge of life. **Ye-will-live**: the eternal life awaiting the servants of Christ. So chs. v. 21, vi. 22, 23, viii. 6, 10, 11.

14—17. Proof that they "will live." **By**-the-**Spirit**: expounding same word in *v.* 13. **Led** *by* the *Spirit:* their thoughts, words, actions, guided by Him. That He prompts and enables us to put to death the actions of the body, proves Him to be the *Spirit* **of God.** He leads us by opening our eyes to recognise sin and see its hurtfulness, and by giving us moral strength to conquer it; by revealing the will of God and its excellence, and by giving us power to do it. **Sons of God**: further explained in *vv.* 15—17, and made the basis of an important argument.

15. Proof that they "are sons of God." **Ye**: assuming that the readers are among the persons just described. **Did not receive**: as usual, the negative side first: cp. 2 Tim. i. 7. **A spirit of bondage**: such as animates slaves. This does not imply that any spirit of bondage actually exists, but merely denies that we have received such. For the characterizing genitive, compare chs. i. 4, viii. 2, xi. 8, Gal. vi. 1, Isa. xi. 2. **For fear**: tendency of the spirit which animates slaves. If God gave us such, He would lead us back **again** to our former state. **But ye received**: solemn repetition, stating the actual case. **Adoption**: *υἱοθεσία*: Greek equivalent for a Roman legal process by which one man took another's son to be his own son. The adopted son took the name and rank of the adopting father, and with certain limitations stood in the same relation to him as a born son. So Aulus Gellius, bk. v. 19: "Into another man's family, and into the position of children, strangers are received." This Roman legal term is found in N.T. only here and in *v.* 23, ch. ix. 4, Gal. iv. 5, Eph. i. 5; used only by Paul, a Roman citizen. It is specially suitable to describe a change made in accordance with the principles of law. **Spirit of** *adoption:* the Holy Spirit, given to those whom God adopts as sons. [The anarthrous term looks upon Him qualitatively as *a Spirit of adoption.*] **In whom**: under whose influence, **we cry**. Cp. 1 Cor. xii. 3, Mt. xxii. 43. **Abba**: Aramaic word for **Father**: so Gal. iv. 6, Mk. xiv. 36. Christ spoke frequently to God and of God as Father; and taught us to do the same. Hence the Aramaic word with which He approached God became sacred to His disciples, and passed into the lips even of those who spoke other languages. Similarly, *Amen* and *Hallelujah*, Hebrew words. The word *Father* is a Greek equivalent for the Aramaic word: as if we said, "Amen, so be it."

With this verse compare Gal. iv. 6. By moving us to cry, the Spirit Himself cries in our hearts: for our cry expresses His thought. He moves us to cry by revealing, through the Gospel, the fatherly love of God: Rom. v. 5. We recognise that love, and cry, My Father God. By prompting this cry, the Spirit makes Himself known as *a Spirit of adoption.* The change from *ye received* to **we cry** puts Paul Himself among the adopted sons.

16. Argument of *v.* 15 in a compact form, showing how it proves the statement in *v.* 14. **The Spirit itself**: A.V.: reproducing the Greek neuter, here used. The R.V. reads into Paul's Greek a correct inference from *v.* 27, 1 Cor. xii. 4—6, 2 Cor. xiii. 13, Jno. xvi. 13, Mt. xxviii. 19. So to render, is not translation, but

exposition. **Bears-joint-witness-with**: same word in chs. ii. 15, ix. 1, (cp. Heb. ii. 4,) denoting a confirmation of what another witness has said. **Our spirit** cried (*v.* 15) *Abba, Father:* and, just as a similar cry from a child is a testimony—though possibly a mistaken one—that he is a son of the man whom he calls Father, so the cry to God of *our spirit*, the highest part of our being, *bears-witness* **that we are children of God.** That this cry was prompted by the Spirit of God, adds His infallible testimony to the testimony of our own spirit, and assures us that our confidence is no delusion. Thus *the Spirit Himself* confirms the testimony of *our spirit.* In the order of cause and effect, the witness of God's Spirit precedes that of our own spirit; for He reveals to us the fatherly love of God, and thus moves us to call Him *Father.* But, in the order of our thought, our own cry comes first. We are first conscious of our own filial confidence, and then observe that it is wrought in us by the Holy Spirit.

The word *witness* is a favourite in Greek for whatever affords proof. Compare carefully Jno. v. 36, x. 25, Acts xiv. 3, 17, xv. 8, Heb. ii. 4. It is specially used in reference to the Holy Spirit; and is very appropriate here because it is by a voice put into our lips that the Holy Spirit gives proof that we are sons of God.

17. Completion of Paul's proof that (*v.* 13) "if by the Spirit ye put to death the actions of the body, ye will live." **If children, also heirs**: inheriting their father's wealth. This last word, Paul expounds in two directions, in reference to **God** and to **Christ.** That by adoption God makes us His sons, implies that we shall be enriched by His wealth, that we shall share the infinite inheritance which belongs to Christ as the Son of God. The words *heirs* and **joint-heirs** recall ch. iv. 13, 14. By adoption we are, not only sons and *heirs of God*, but brothers *of Christ* and *joint-heirs* of His glorious inheritance.

The proof of the assertion in *v.* 13, "ye will live," is now complete. In virtue of His relation to the Father, Christ will live for ever: cp. Jno. v. 26, vi. 57. Therefore, if we are sharers of His inheritance, we too "shall live" for ever. And if so, as stated in *v.* 12, our hope of eternal life binds us to follow the guidance of the Spirit. For to Him we owe our confidence that we are children of God. See a similar argument in Eph. iv. 30; also ch. i. 13, 14, 2 Cor. i. 22.

If, as I assume, etc.: condition on which we *are heirs together with Christ.* All who suffer because they obey God **suffer-together** with Christ. For their sufferings, like His, arise from

the world's hatred to God, and are endured willingly to advance the purposes for which Christ died. Cp. 2 Cor. i. 5, Col. i. 24, 2 Tim. ii. 12, Mk. x. 39. These words remind us, as does ch. v. 3, of the persecutions of the early Christians. But in some measure they are true of all servants of Christ: for His service always involves sacrifice. **In order that we may etc.**: purpose for which God lays suffering upon us, and a hope which helps us cheerfully to endure it. We gladly accept the cross, that we may wear the crown: so Mt. v. 12, Acts v. 41. **Glorified**: with the splendour, exciting admiration, with which God will crown His servants: so *vv.* 18, 21, 30, v. 2, 1 Cor. xv. 43, 2 Cor. iv. 17, Col. i. 27. These words complete the picture of our partnership with Christ. [Notice the group of words beginning with *συν-*: chs. vi. 4, 5, 6, 8, viii. 17, 22, 26, 28, 29, Eph. ii. 5, 6, Col. ii. 11, 12, 13, iii. 1.] We are sharers of His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection. We must share His sufferings; but we share His sonship, and shall share His heritage of glory.

The ARGUMENT of *vv.* 12—17, we will now rebuild from the premises assumed. Paul assumes that his readers are day by day trampling upon, and thus destroying, their former habits of sin; and that they confidently call God their Father. Their former bondage proves that this victory is from a Helper higher than themselves. That this Helper is within them, and gives victory over sin, proves Him to be the Spirit of God: cp. Mt. xii. 24—29. Again, we look up to God as our Father, lean upon His strong arm, and in His protection find rest amid the uncertainties and storms of life. This was not always so. In days gone by, although we knew that God loved us, His love had no practical effect on our thoughts, emotions, or life: it now fills us (ch. v. 5) with exultant hope and joy. This contrast of past and present proves that God has put a new spirit within us. Moreover, we find by experience that power over sin and filial confidence in God go together. From this we infer that these have one source, i.e. that both are produced by the Spirit of God. And, if He prompts us to call God our Father, we cannot doubt that we are actually His children. If so, our expectation must be measured by the inheritance of the Firstborn Son, whose brethren we are. We therefore infer with certainty that we shall share Christ's immortal life. And, if so, we have the strongest reason for surrendering ourselves to the guidance of the Holy Spirit, whose presence in us is the source and confirmation of a hope so glorious.

Notice here an argument based upon inward religious experience.

To others, such evidence, except so far as it is confirmed by outward conduct, is invalid. But to the man himself it is decisive. For it is matter of direct inward observation. That Paul appeals to it in argument, reveals his confidence that his own experience was shared by his readers. Notice also that his teaching is carefully guarded from perversion. He appeals, not to a mere assurance that we are children of God, but to an assurance accompanied by power over sin. Moreover, the voice of the Spirit within us is but an echo of teaching which we can trace by abundant documentary evidence to the lips of Christ. Thus the testimony of the Spirit is one which we can intelligently weigh and estimate, and for our acceptance of which we can give a reason.

That a life beyond the grave implies resurrection of the body, is assumed in 1 Cor. xv. 18, 19, 29—32, Lk. xx. 37: see my *Corinthians* p. 287. Assuming this, the argument in *vv.* 12—17 proves the statement in *vv.* 10, 11 that God will raise even the bodies of His servants. Paul thus completes the contrast of a life according to flesh and according to the Spirit.

In *vv.* 14, 16, they who follow the guidance of the Spirit are called *sons* and *children of God.* As created by God in His own image, and therefore sharers of His nature, all men indiscriminately may be so called. But we notice that throughout the N.T. these terms are reserved for the righteous, whose sonship is spoken of as an acquired relation to God: so Gal. iii. 26, iv. 5, Jno. i. 12, 1 Jno. iii. 10, Jno. viii. 42, 44. That not all men are sons of God, is implied in Paul's use of the term *adoption:* for no Roman adopted his own son. The explanation is that by sin we lost our rights as sons, and can regain them only by the adopting mercy of God. A conspicuous and beautiful exception to the above reservation is found in Lk. xv. 11, 24: cp. also Acts xvii. 28, 29. See my *New Life in Christ* pp. 57—60.

DIVISION III. may from this point be suitably reviewed. In ch. vi., we have the new life in reference to its aim and purpose, viz. God; in ch. vii., in reference to the Law, i.e. the principle that God will treat us according to our deserts; in ch. viii., in reference to its immediate source and motive power, viz. the Spirit of God. In ch. vi., the new life is deliverance from the rule of sin which tends to death, and subjection to the rule of God which tends to life: in ch. viii., it is deliverance from the rule of our own flesh which also tends to death, and submission to the guidance

of the Holy Spirit who gives life of spirit and body. The difference results from the teaching of ch. vii. The Law reveals sin as an inward power compelling us, in spite of better desires, to serve sin; and thus proves that in order to live for God we must receive a Spirit stronger than our own spirit, to set us free from the inward rule of sin and to become by His own presence in us the source of a life of which God is the only aim. We are thus prepared to hear (ch. viii. 3) that God sent Christ in order that the Holy Spirit may become the guiding principle of our life.

SPIRIT. The word thus rendered denotes *breath* in Gen. vi. 17, vii. 15, 22, Job xxvii. 3, Ps. xxxiii. 6, etc.; cp. 2 Th. ii. 8. It is also used, by a familiar association of thought, for *wind:* Isa. xl. 7, Ps. xviii. 15, Gen. viii. 1, Num. xi. 31, Hos. xiii. 15. This explains Jno. iii. 8.

Since breath is an invariable mark of life, which began with our first breath and will end with our last, the word *spirit* often denotes the principle of life. So Rev. xiii. 15, xi. 11, Lk. viii. 55, Jno. xix. 30, Acts vii. 59, Jas. ii. 26; Eccl. xii. 7. Animals, since they breathe and live, have a *spirit:* Gen. vii. 15, 22, Eccl. iii. 19, 21. Since life is a condition of intelligence, power, and activity, the word *spirit* denotes the seat of knowledge, emotion, purpose, and the source of action: 1 Cor. ii. 11, Mk. ii. 8; Lk. i. 47, Acts xvii. 16; xix. 21; Rom. i. 9. The spirit is the unseen and immaterial animating principle which gives to the visible and material flesh animated by it life, intelligence, power, and activity.

We frequently read in O.T. of the Spirit of God, of Jehovah, and in N.T. of the Spirit of God and of Christ, the Holy Spirit. Except in a few places noted above, these terms denote the source of a divine influence acting on man from within, and giving him strength, skill, voice, and wisdom altogether beyond his own natural capacity: Jud. xiv. 6, 19, xv. 14, xvi. 20; Ex. xxxi. 3; Num. xxiv. 2, 1 Sam. x. 6, 2 Sam. xxiii. 2, Isa. xi. 2, 3. Men thus became the arm, hand, and voice of God. Since this influence always tends to inspire loyalty to God, its source is called in Ps. li. 11, Isa. lxiii. 10, 11, the Spirit of Holiness; and in Rom. v. 5, ix. 1, xv. 16, 19, etc. the Holy Spirit. We find also in 1 Sam. xvi. 14—23, Jud. ix. 23, an evil spirit of God, i.e. one who works out in men God's purpose of anger: cp. 1 Kgs. xxii. 21. Throughout the O.T. the Spirit of God is the source of an inward influence from God, a bearer of the presence, and of all the attributes, of God.

In Rom. v. 5, the Holy Spirit reveals to men the love of God manifested in the death of Christ; and in ch. viii. 15 puts into their lips a new voice. He gives them moral strength to conquer sin, and is their guide in life: *vv.* 13, 14. He makes them to be in heart the people of God, and becomes to them the mainspring of a new life: chs. ii. 29, vii. 6. He is thus a source of holiness, hope, and joy: chs. xv. 16, 13, xiv. 17. He is called the Spirit of Christ, and is a bearer in us of the presence of Christ; and His presence in us is a pledge of immortal life: ch. viii. 10, 11.

In 1 Cor. ii. 11, the Spirit of God is compared to man's own spirit. This analogy will help us to understand the term before us. Just as the spirit (Lk. viii. 55) given back to Jairus' daughter restored to her lifeless form life, consciousness, activity, and development, so the Spirit of God breathed into those who put faith in Christ (Gal. iii. 14) gives them a deathless life, makes them conscious of the eternal realities, imparts a new spiritual power and activity, and puts into their lips a new song of praise. And, just as our own spirit is altogether different from, and in essential dignity greater than, our body, yet united to it by an all-pervading and mysterious fellowship, so the Spirit of God is in essential dignity infinitely greater than our spirit, yet pervading it by a still more mysterious fellowship.

Notice the connection between the Spirit and the Gospel and Christ. In the historic Christ, God has made Himself manifest before our eyes. The Gospel is the divine light which bears to our mind the image of Christ. The Holy Spirit is the life which enables our mental eye to see the glorious object, moves our lips to praise, and our bodies to bow in worship. Thus the Spirit gives to us a life, intelligence, and power, which are not human but divine.

The Spirit always acts upon us from the inmost chamber of our being, i.e. with the full consent and approbation of whatever is noblest and best within us; in marked contrast to sin, which never secures our highest approbation, and thus betrays its foreign and inferior and hostile origin.

In Rom. viii. 27, we read that the Spirit intercedes on behalf of saints: see note. This suggests that the Spirit is a person distinct from God, with whom the Spirit intercedes. For without two distinct persons there can be no intercession. This is confirmed by 1 Cor. xii. 4—6, 11, 2 Cor. xiii. 13, Mt. xxviii. 19, Rev. i. 4, 5 and still more clearly in Jno. xvi. 13, 14. See my *New Life in Christ* pp. 306, 308. If we accept the clear and abundant teaching

of the N.T. that the Son of God is a divine person distinct from the Father, the above passages and the whole tenor of O.T. and N.T. will compel us to believe that with the Father and the Son is a Third divine Person, the mysterious and blessed Spirit of God.

The word *Spirit* is used (e.g. Rom. viii. 26) to distinguish this divine Person from the Father and the Son, who are also (cp. Jno. iv. 24) essentially spirit, because, in virtue of His essential nature as compared with that of the Father and the Son, He comes into immediate contact with our spirit as the inward source of a higher life and as the moving principle of our thoughts, words, and acts. Moreover, the title *holy*, which belongs in the highest sense to the Father and the Son, is applied with special frequency to this Third divine Person; because conspicuously, in contrast to every other inward influence, God is the one aim of the influence He constantly exerts. Every moment He comes forth from the Father, in order that He may lead us back to Him: and only so far as we are moved by the Spirit is God the one aim of our purposes and efforts. Hence all human holiness is the mind of the Spirit realised in those to whom He is the soul of their soul and the life of their life.

God's work in man preparatory to justification is not, in the Bible, attributed to the Holy Spirit. Yet we cannot doubt that He is the Agent by whom God leads men (Rom. ii. 4) to repentance and (Jno. vi. 44, 65) to Christ. The explanation probably is that the word *Spirit* is reserved for this divine Person when acting as *spirit*, i.e. as a life-giving influence acting upon us from within. On those not justified He acts only from without. The Hand of God is upon them: but His life-giving Breath is not yet within them.

ASSURANCE OF JUSTIFICATION. Paul assumes that his readers know that they are justified. In Rom. v. 2, he asserts that they have been brought into God's favour and stand therein, and look forward with joy to future glory. In *vv.* 9—11, he bases an argument on the fact that they have been justified and reconciled and now exult in God. They have experienced a total change in life: chs. vi. 17—23, vii. 5, 6. They are, as led by the Spirit of God, sons of God: ch. viii. 13. They have already been saved, and are looking forward to a glory compared with which present afflictions are of no account: *vv.* 24, 18. Although many of them are Gentiles, by faith they have obtained righteousness, and have been grafted into the good olive tree: chs. ix. 30, xi. 17—20. The

Holy Spirit, given to them, has made them conscious of God's love, and taught them to call Him Father: chs. v. 5, viii. 15.

The Galatian Christians were, amid many imperfections, sons and heirs of God through faith, the Spirit of the Son crying in their hearts "Father:" Gal. iii. 26, iv. 6. The Ephesian Christians had the forgiveness of their trespasses, had been saved through faith and made alive, brought near to God and built into the rising walls of the living temple: Eph. i. 7, ii. 5, 8, 13, 20. When they believed, they were sealed with the Holy Spirit, a pledge of blessings to come: chs. i. 13, iv. 30. In his many prayers, Paul never asks that his readers' sins may be forgiven, nor does he hold out to them a promise of forgiveness. He always assumes that they know that they are forgiven. Contrast the addresses recorded in Acts xiii. 38, xxvi. 18, ii. 38, where salvation is offered to the unsaved.

Similarly in 1 Jno. ii. 12 even the children of the family of God are forgiven. The readers are children of God, in a sense distinguishing them from others: ch. iii. 2, 10. They know that they have passed out of death into life, that they are of God, and that they abide in Christ, because God has given them the Spirit: chs. iii. 14, v. 19, iii. 24, iv. 13: cp. ch. v. 13. Similarly 1 Pet. i. 3—8.

This teaching suggests that conscious forgiveness was an ordinary experience in the apostolic Churches: it certainly implies that it is a blessing designed by God for every member of the Church.

How was this assurance obtained? Since it is assumed in Rom. v. 2—11, we must seek an answer in Paul's foregoing teaching. Assurance is involved in the nature of justifying faith. For, as we saw in the note under ch. iv. 25, this last is an assurance resting upon the promise and power and faithfulness of God that He receives into His favour, in spite of their past sins, all who put faith in Christ. For assurance is matter of immediate consciousness. Consequently, if God receives all who believe, we know that He receives us. Our assurance is derived from and rests upon the promise and character of God, a promise which we have traced by strict historic method to the lips of Him who claimed to be the Son of God and who in proof of this claim was raised from the dead. This firm ground of faith and hope is greatly strengthened by the manifestation, in the death of the Son of God, of the infinite love of God to man. This ground of confidence in God and of assurance of salvation

is rational and capable of rational statement. Accordingly, in order to confirm our hope of glory, Paul proves in ch. v. 5—8, by correct human reasoning, from historic fact, how great is God's love. In other words, the assurance of forgiveness assumed by Paul rests upon the love of God manifested in the death of Him who by resurrection from the dead made good His claim to be the Son of God, this love being apprehended by correct human reasoning. It rests on ground external to us, ground which our best judgment pronounces to be absolutely firm.

Again, Paul teaches in Rom. v. 5 that our assurance of God's love, although resting on well-attested historic fact, is wrought in us by the Holy Spirit; and in ch. viii. 15 that the filial cry with which we give utterance to our assurance is the echo of His voice. Similarly, our consciousness of objects around us, while evoked in us by those objects, is conditioned by our life and intelligence. For the inanimate and the irrational are wholly or in great part unconscious of them. Just so, our assurance of future life is evoked in us by facts placed by history before our eyes and by words spoken in our ears, facts and words manifesting the eternal Nature and Purpose of God; and by the Holy Spirit who enables us to understand, and feel the force of, the facts and the words. It has thus an historic and logical ground, and a spiritual source. Hence Paul is careful on the one hand to expound the meaning of the facts and the words, and on the other hand to pay homage to the Spirit who through the facts and the words gives us an assurance of future glory.

We can direct for a time our exclusive attention either to the historic and visible ground, or to the spiritual source, of our assurance. When we wish to prove how firm is the foundation on which our hope rests, we go to the cross and the empty grave and the promises. At other times, while resting in peace on this firm ground of hope, we acknowledge that whatever assurance we have of God's present favour and of future blessedness is wrought in us by the indwelling Spirit. Thus in the Gospel by which God saves us and assures us of salvation we have that mysterious inter-penetration of spirit and form which is co-extensive with life, and especially with human life, as known to us. The spoken and written word is the outward form: the Holy Spirit is the inward and animating principle which pervades the word and gives to it life and power. For He is "the Spirit of the Truth:" Jno. xiv. 17.

The process of assurance may be thus described. The Gospel

proclaims that through the death of Christ God receives into His favour and family all who believe this good news. We have proof (see Diss. i.) that this proclamation is the voice of God. We therefore accept it as true; and venture to believe that God accepts into His favour all who believe it, and therefore ourselves. We thus come consciously into the number of those whose acquittal the Gospel proclaims. In the moment of our faith, God accepts us as righteous, adopts us as sons, and sends forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts. The Spirit opens our mind to understand the meaning of the death of Christ, and thus makes known to us God's love: and this revealed love assures us that the hope evoked by the promises will not deceive us. We now look up to God as our Father; and we find by happy experience that while we do so we have power to conquer our inveterate habits of sin. This victory we accept as further confirmation of the promise of life eternal.

SECTION XXV

OUR HOPE IS CONFIRMED BY THE PRESENT STATE OF NATURE AND OF OURSELVES

CH. VIII. 18—27

For I reckon that the sufferings of the present season are of no worth in view of the glory which will be revealed for us. [19] *For the expectation of the Creation waits for the revelation of the sons of God.* [20] *For to vanity was the Creation made subject, not willingly, but because of Him who made* it *subject, in hope* [21] *that also the Creation itself will be made free from the bondage of corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God.* [22] *For we know that the whole Creation groans together and is in travail together until now.*

[23] *And not only they but also ourselves who have the firstfruit of the Spirit, we also groan, ourselves within ourselves, waiting for adoption, the redemption of our body.* [24] *For* in *hope were*

we saved. But a hope seen is not hope. For that which one sees, why does he hope for? [25] *But if, what we do not see we hope for, with perseverance we wait for* it.

[26] *In the same way also the Spirit helps with our weakness. For what we are to pray for, according to what is needful, we know not. But the Spirit Itself intercedes* for us *with unspeakable groanings.* [27] *But He that searches the hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, that according to* the will of *God He intercedes on behalf of saints.*

18. In *v.* 17, Paul introduced two new thoughts, "suffer-together" and "glorified-together." These he now expounds, and thus supports the implied exhortation to suffer with Christ. **I reckon**: a deliberate calculation, as in ch. ii. 3. **The present season**: as in ch. iii. 26. **Revealed**: see under ch. i. 17. **Glory** *revealed:* so 1 Pet. iv. 13, v. 1; cp. Col. iii. 4. The splendour awaiting the sons of God is now hidden from the eyes of themselves and of those around. But Christ will soon appear in splendour; and with His own splendour, before men and angels, He will clothe His brethren. Thus He and they will "be glorified together." In the light of that glory, present afflictions are of **no worth. For us**: purpose of this revelation, viz. to cover us with splendour.

19. Further account of this glory. **Creation**: same word as *creature* in *v.* 39, ch. i. 25, 2 Cor. v. 17, Heb. iv. 13. It denotes both the act of creating and the whole or any part of that which is created: so Rom. i. 20, Mk. x. 6, xiii. 19; Col. i. 15, 23, 1 Pet. ii. 13: cp. 2 Cor. v. 17. In each case, the precise meaning is determined by the context. Here, *the Creation* is distinguished from *the sons of God;* and therefore does not include them. The words *made subject to vanity* and *groan* in *v.* 20 exclude happy spirits of other worlds. The liberation foretold in *v.* 21 excludes bad angels and those who finally reject the Gospel: for Paul teaches constantly, e.g. Rom. ii. 12, Ph. iii. 19, 2 Th. i. 9, that their end is destruction. It therefore remains that *the Creation* here denotes the entire world around us, living and lifeless, man alone excepted; what we call Nature, this looked upon as a work of God. The same word is used in the same sense in Wisdom v. 17, xvi. 24, xix. 6. This interpretation has been adopted, with slight modifications, by a majority of writers of all ages.

Revelation: recalling the word *revealed* in *v.* 18. **The sons**

of God: recalling *v.* 14. They are now in disguise; and Christ is hidden from their sight. When He appears, their glory and therefore their true character and position will be made known to themselves, to men, and to angels. For that revelation of their glory, they **wait** with eager **expectation**: literally, waiting with outstretched head, as though listening for the footstep of the Revealer. This expectant attitude of Nature is here personified, as a witness to the glory awaiting the sons of God.

20, 21. These verses justify the hope implied in *v.* 19. **Vanity**: producing no worthy result: cp. ch. i. 21. **Made-subject to *vanity*:** condemned to useless toil. Nature brings forth thorns and thistles: and, although with these are mingled objects of use and beauty, on all is the doom of decay. So *v.* 21: *the bondage of corruption.* This fruitless effort was not Nature's original destiny, but was a result of man's sin: Gen. iii. 17, 18. It was thus in some sense forced upon Nature. And this Paul expresses, keeping up his personification, by saying that Nature submits to it **not willingly. Because of Him who subjected**: in obedience to the decree of Him who said (Gen. iii. 18) "thorns and thistles etc." **In hope that**: a prospect of deliverance involved in this sad decree. **Bondage of corruption**: by the necessary decay of its products, Nature is prevented from putting forth its powers, from manifesting its real grandeur, and from attaining its original destiny. All that Nature brings forth is doomed to die. And it is compelled to slay its own offspring. The lightning-flash destroys the stately oak: the winter's cold kills the songsters of the summer: and animals devour other animals to maintain life. This universal destruction limits the achievements of Nature. Instead of sustained growth, its beauty and strength fade away. The powers of the material Creation are bound in fetters of decay. That this bondage was not Nature's original destiny, but was laid upon it by God because of man's sin, suggests to Paul a *hope that* **Nature itself will be made free**, that it will share **the freedom** awaiting **the children of God.** This liberation from everything which would hinder their full development belongs to **the glory** (see *vv.* 17, 18) which will be revealed for them.

22. A well-known ground for Paul's hope that Nature will be made free: **for we know etc. Groans-together and is-in-travail-together**: one united cry of sorrow and one great anguish. Every voice in Nature which reminds us of its bondage to corruption, Paul conceives to be a cry of sorrow. The storm which wreaks

destruction, and the roar of the hungry lion, tell that the original purpose of the Creator has been perverted, and that Nature is not what He designed it to be. **The whole Creation . . . until now:** a cry universal and unceasing. Since Nature's disorganization is a result of man's sin, Paul infers that it will not last for ever, and that the confusion and destruction around, so inconsistent with the character and purpose of the Creator, will give way to order and liberty. In other words, he can account for the present anomalous state of Nature only by supposing it to be temporary, to be preparatory to something more consistent with its original destiny. He therefore speaks of Nature's agony as *travail*, as pangs soon and suddenly to cease at the birth of a new earth and heaven. Cp. Jno. xvi. 21.

Notice that Paul, when speaking of future glory, adopts the thoughts and words of the old prophets: cp. Ps. xcviii. 8, Isa. lv. 12, 13.

We have here another proof (cp. ch. i. 20) of Paul's careful contemplation of the material world. For important coincidences, see Acts xiv. 17, xvii. 24. The argument also involves the teaching in Rom. v. 12—14 that death is a consequence of sin.

If the above exposition be correct, *vv.* 19—22 suggest very clearly that the earth beneath our feet, rescued from the curse of sin, will be our eternal home: cp. Acts iii. 21, Rev. xxi. 1. This implies the permanence of matter. Just as the sin of man's spirit brought a curse on his body, so it brought a curse also upon the greater dwelling-place of the entire race. And, just as the body will some day share the liberation which the spirit already enjoys, so will also the world around. Thus, in the teaching of Paul, are the fortunes of the material world indissolubly joined to those of its chief inhabitant, man.

The above teaching of Paul, if I have correctly understood it, lies open to objection even more serious than that referred to under ch. v. 12: for it implies that even animals die because Adam sinned. This conflicts with assured results of Natural Science. But possibly this apparent discrepancy arises from a deeper truth beyond the ken of Natural Science, viz. that the entire visible universe was designed for man and his moral education, and is therefore subservient to his destiny. This would explain many marks of imperfection in the world around. And it could be apprehended in Paul's day only in some such form as lies before us in these verses.

23. Another confirmatory fact. **Not only** does the whole Creation

groan, waiting for liberation, **but also** *ourselves groan, waiting for adoption* and *redemption.* **Firstfruit:** same word in ch. xi. 16, xvi. 5, 1 Cor. xv. 20, 23, xvi. 15, Jas. i. 18, Rev. xiv. 4. In Dt. xxvi. 2, 10, Num. xviii. 12, 13, etc., it denotes first-ripe fruit or grain, of which a part was to be given to God. **The** Holy **Spirit** received by Paul and his readers was a *firstfruit* in a double sense, in reference to the greater number who will afterwards receive the same, as in the passages quoted above, and in reference to the greater blessings in the future of which the present gift of the Spirit is a pledge. The usage of the N.T. favours the former reference here. The truth embodied in the latter reference finds expression in "the earnest of the Spirit" in 2 Cor. i. 22, Eph. i. 14, and may possibly be in Paul's thought here. The words before us remind the readers of their happy lot in being among the first to receive salvation. **We groan:** a close parallel in 2 Cor. v. 2, 4, where again we have *the Spirit* as an "earnest" of better things. It recalls the groaning of Nature in *v.* 22. **Ourselves within ourselves:** conspicuously asserting the inwardness and the felt intensity of this groaning. **Waiting-for:** as in *v.* 19. Our groaning is a yearning for something to come, prompted not merely by present burden but by the contrast of present and future. **Adoption:** the legal ceremony by which a child passed formally into the family of the adopting father. See under *v.* 15. Virtually we are already sons of God, and already with filial confidence we call Him Father: but we wait for the time when we shall be formally and publicly brought into our Father's house, clothed in the raiment of sons, and made to sit down beside the Firstborn Son. **Redemption:** a setting free on payment of a price, as in ch. iii. 24. But there the emphasis was on the price, viz. the blood (*v.* 25) of Christ: here it is on the liberation, as in Lk. xxi. 28, Eph. i. 14, iv. 30. **Of our body:** its rescue from death and the grave. Not only Nature but even the bodies in which the Holy Spirit dwells, making them His temple, are held fast by fetters of decay. But they have been purchased by the death of Christ and therefore will be rescued from the grave. Since the body is an integral part of us, not till it is rescued will our redemption be complete. Therefore, under the burdens of the present life arising from the needs and weakness of the body, knowing that we can enter our full glory only by rescue of our body, our groaning assumes the form of a yearning for its rescue.

24, 25. Explains the contrast between the present hardships and the future glory of the sons of God. Our position is one of *hope*,

not possession. **We were saved**: cp. Eph. ii. 5, 8: already rescued from the punishment and the present power of our past sins. This salvation has been described in ch. vi. 22. Until the conflict of life is over, and until the body is rescued from the grave, it is incomplete: and therefore in this sense salvation is in chs. v. 9, 10, xiii. 11 spoken of as still future. In 1 Cor. i. 18, 2 Cor. ii. 15, it is spoken of as a process now going on. These are three modes of looking at the same deliverance. In **hope,** or *by hope:* our rescue holds before us a prospect of better things to come. Cp. 1 Pet. i. 3. Now the very nature of hope involves absence of things hoped for: **a hope seen is not hope.** This last statement is sufficiently proved by asking a question: **that which a man sees, why does he hope for?** The alternative reading given in R.V. and by Westcott (texts) does not affect the sense. *Seen . . . sees . . . we see:* as in 2 Cor. iv. 18. After showing the incompatibility of hope and sight, Paul states, in *v.* 25, the believer's actual attitude. **Perseverance**: as in chs. ii. 7, v. 4. **We-wait-for** it: recalling *vv.* 19, 23, and a dominant thought of *vv.* 18—25. A brave holding up and going forward in spite of hardship and enemies, in prospect of blessing to come, is the normal attitude of men whose position is one, not of possession, but of hope.

26. Another confirmation. **In the same way** as Nature groans for deliverance, and as we inwardly groan for adoption and redemption, **also the Spirit** groans in us and for us and so *helps* us in *our weakness.* **Helps-with**: shares our toil and conflict: same word in Lk. x. 40. **Our weakness**: us who are weak, the abstract for the concrete, as in ch. ii. 26, 27. The rest of the verse states the special help which we need and the Spirit gives. **We do not know what we are to pray for** so as to pray **according as we must needs** pray. We are conscious of *need;* and we groan. But such is the *weakness* (cp. ch. vi. 19) of our spiritual insight that we do not know how to ask so that our prayers may correspond with our real need. **But the Spirit,** who prompts us (*v.* 15) to call God our Father, inspires yearnings which words cannot express, and thus helps us by directing our desires to proper objects. These inspired yearnings express the mind of the Holy Spirit, and therefore appeal to God for us. Thus He **intercedes** for us and in us by moving us to pray. And God will not refuse to satisfy yearnings which *the Spirit* **Itself** (as in *v.* 16) by His own presence puts within us. Since these yearnings are too deep for words, they are described as **unspeakable groanings.**

27. That these groanings are unspeakable, does not lessen their efficacy. For they appeal to one who **searches the hearts** (Rev. ii. 23, Jer. xvii. 10, 1 Sam. xvi. 7) and thus hears this silent intercession. **The mind of the Spirit:** the aim of the yearnings prompted by the Spirit. Same words, referring to the general guidance of the Spirit, in *v.* 6. The mind of the Spirit is **that, according to** the will of **God, He intercedes on behalf of saints:** in other words, God, who sees all that takes place in the hearts of men, recognises that our yearnings for final and complete deliverance are prompted by the Holy Spirit, in harmony with the will of God, and are therefore an intercession of the Spirit pleading for men whom God has claimed to be specially His own.

In ch. v. 5, the Holy Spirit given to believers reveals to them the love of God manifested in the death of Christ. In ch. viii. 15, 16, He prompts them to cry Abba, Father: and He now moves them to groan for complete deliverance from whatever fetters their full development. The inward cry in *v.* 15, Paul accepts as a divine testimony that they are children of God: the unspeakable groanings in *v.* 26, he accepts as an intercession with God on their behalf; an intercession which cannot be ineffectual, and which is therefore a pledge that these yearnings will be satisfied.

That the Spirit intercedes with God for the final rescue and glory of His servants, suggests that He is a person distinct from the Father. The strongly figurative colour of *vv.* 19—27 forbids us to accept this as in itself decisive proof that Paul held the distinct personality of the Spirit. But it is an important confirmation of other passages, e.g. 1 Cor. xii. 4—6, 2 Cor. xiii. 13, Mt. xxviii. 19, where the name of the Spirit is placed beside those of the Father and the Son, and of still more definite teaching in Jno. xvi. 13, 14.

REVIEW of **18—27.** In ch. v. 2, Paul showed that justification through faith gives an exultant hope of glory. While showing this, he could not pass in silence over the hardships which were so conspicuous a part of the lot of the Christians of his day. He asserts that even these hardships indirectly confirm this glorious hope. In ch. viii. 13—17, he shows that the Holy Spirit in their hearts, moving them to call God their Father, is Himself a proof that they are children of God and heirs of the glorious heritage of Christ. And again, present hardships, apparently so inconsistent with this blessed relation to Christ, demand consideration. This they receive in *vv.* 18—39.

Paul declares that present hardships are not worthy to be

compared with the glory awaiting us. So great is this glory that it will transform even the material universe. An indication of this, Paul finds in the decay which reigns over all things around us, so inconsistent with the original destiny of a good creature of God, a doom inflicted on Nature because of man's sin. This doom of decay, Paul represents as a groaning for deliverance and accepts as a pledge that deliverance will come. This groaning is shared by us who, as Paul expounded in *vv.* 4—17, have received the Holy Spirit as the animating principle of a new life. It is indeed prompted by the Spirit who makes us conscious of the contrast between our present condition and the glory awaiting us. And if so, these divinely-implanted yearnings plead with God, silently but effectively, for us. They are in harmony with the will of God; and are therefore a pledge of their own fulfilment.

SECTION XXVI

IN ALL THINGS WE ARE MORE THAN CONQUERORS

CH. VIII. 28—39

Moreover, we know that with *those that love God all things work together for good,* with *those that are called according to purpose.* [29] *Because,* us *whom He foreknew, He also foreordained* to be *conformed to the image of His Son, in order that He may be firstborn among many brethren.* [30] *But, whom He foreordained, these He also called: and, whom He called, these He also justified: but, whom He justified, these He also glorified.*

[31] *What then shall we say to these things? If God* be *on our side, who* is *against us?* [32] *He that did not spare His own Son but on behalf of us all gave Him up, how shall He not also with Him give us all things by His grace?* [33] *Who will bring a charge against God's chosen ones?* It is *God that justifies:* [34] *who* is *he that condemns?* It is *Christ that died, but rather that was raised,*

who is at the *right hand of God, who also intercedes on our behalf.* [35] *Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall affliction, or helplessness, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword?* [36] *According as it is written, "On account of Thee we are put to death all the day: we have been reckoned as sheep for slaughter."* [37] *Nay, in all these things we more than conquer, through Him that loved us.* [38] *For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities, nor things present nor things coming, nor powers,* [39] *nor height nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which* is *in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

In *vv.* 12—17, the Holy Spirit, by enabling us to conquer sin and call God our Father, gave proof that we are children of God and heirs of the glory of Christ. In *vv.* 18—27, the hope thus inspired was confirmed by our present sufferings; inasmuch as they force us to yearn with a divinely-taught yearning, which in some sense even Nature itself shares, for the consummation of our sonship. We shall now learn that these sufferings are working out our good, and are powerless to injure us.

28. Another important point in our favour. Not only does the Spirit help us by prompting our groanings, but *all things* help us. **All things work together:** harmonious co-operation, under apparent discord. The Vat. and Alex. MSS. read *God works all things.* But the weight of evidence is against the insertion, the context suggests that things around are here regarded as active rather than passive, and the insertion is easily explained by failure to appreciate Paul's personification of Nature. **For good:** to do us good, as in ch. xiii. 4. Contrast Gen. xlii. 36: "all these things are against me." **Those that love God:** the normal relation of sons to their father, and of intelligent creatures to God. It is therefore a condition and limitation of this helpful co-operation of Nature: cp. 1 Cor. viii. 3. **With** *them* or **for** *them:* the dative governed by συν- or the dative of advantage. Probably the former. We work, and all things help us in our work. **Those that are** *called according to purpose:* further description of those who love God. These unexpected words prove, as we shall see, that *all things work together* with us.

Called: persons who have received a summons; in this case, as we read in *v.* 30, from God. Same word in ch. i. 1, 6, 7, 1 Cor. i. 1, 2, 24, Mt. xxii. 14, Jude 1, Rev. xvii. 14. The Gospel

is a divine call summoning men to the service of Christ: 2 Th. ii. 14, 1 Cor. vii. 18—22. The apostles had received a special call: Gal. i. 15, Mt. iv. 21, ix. 9. That the word *called* is (e.g. 1 Cor. i. 24) a distinctive title of believers, does not prove or even suggest that they have received a call not given to those who reject the Gospel. For the term is sufficiently accounted for by the infinite importance of the Gospel summons as the instrument of salvation. Paul never forgot that he was a *called* apostle, remembering the voice which arrested him on the way to Damascus. But doubtless Judas was called to the same office. Of any special call to repentance and faith given to some who hear the Gospel and not to all, and always effectual, we never read in the New Testament. In Mt. xxii. 3—14, we read of some who were called and yet finally rejected; and in 2 Th. i. 8 of their destruction.

According to purpose: 2 Tim. i. 9, Eph. i. 11, iii. 11. The Gospel corresponds with, and makes known, a *purpose* of God touching those to whom it is preached. In this purpose lies its real worth. Just so, when a king resolves to honour a man, and carrying out his resolve calls him into his presence, the importance of the royal summons depends on the royal purpose. So the real significance of the Gospel is measured by the divine purpose which prompted it. This purpose is universal: 1 Tim. ii. 4. Consequently, all who hear the Gospel are *called according to purpose*. That God has thought fit that His purpose shall be accomplished only in those who believe and persevere, does not make the purpose less real and important, or less than universal.

On the importance of these last words of *v.* 28, see under *v.* 30.

29, 30. Facts explaining the *purpose* just mentioned, and proving the assertion that *all things work together for good*. **Foreknew:** same word in ch. xi. 2, Acts ii. 23, xxvi. 5, 1 Pet. i. 2, 20, 2 Pet. iii. 17, Wisdom vi. 13, viii. 8, xviii. 6: simply, to know beforehand. There is nothing here to suggest any other than this simple meaning. In the everlasting past, we, our circumstances, disposition, and conduct, stood before the mind of God. *Us:* added merely to make a complete English sentence. The rendering (R.V.) *whom He foreknew* may suggest that God foreordained to the image of Christ all whom He foreknew. But Paul merely asserts that those whom God foreordained were then present to His thought. So 1 Pet. i. 2. Nor does he say that God foreknew them in any sense other than that in which He

foreknew all men. The reason for the insertion of these words will soon appear.

Foreordained or *predestined:* marked out beforehand, especially in one's mind: found in N.T. only in Eph. i. 5, 11, Acts iv. 28, 1 Cor. ii. 7. The simpler form *ordained* (ὁρίζω) is found in Rom. i. 4, Lk. xxii. 22, Acts ii. 23, x. 42, xi. 29, xvii. 26, 31, Heb. iv. 7; and means to mark off some object by drawing a boundary-line around it. A parent who, before his child is old enough for a trade, chooses one for him predestines the boy. He marks out beforehand a path in which he would have him go. This purpose, whether accomplished or not, is predestination. To be **conformed etc.**: God's purpose for the persons here referred to. **Image**: as in ch. i. 23, 1 Cor. xi. 7, xv. 49, 2 Cor. iii. 18, iv. 4, Col. i. 15, Heb. x. 1, Mt. xxii. 20, Rev. xiii. 14, 15: any mode in which an object presents itself to us, whether in essential relation to the object or a mere imitation of it. In the eternal past, before the eye of God stood **His Son.** That glorious *image*, His essential nature as contemplated by the Father, God resolved to make the pattern to which should be *conformed* those who in later days should put faith in Christ. *Conformed:* sharing the same *form*, or mode of self-presentation. Same word in Ph. iii. 21, cognate words in Ph. iii. 10, Rom. xii. 2, 2 Cor. iii. 18. God's eternal purpose was that His created sons should share, in created and finite form, the mode in which the eternal Son ever presents Himself to God: *conformed to the image of His Son.* The context suggests that Paul refers specially to the glory of Christ. But this involves moral likeness.

That He may be etc.: the ultimate aim of the purpose just mentioned. **Firstborn**: Col. i. 15, 18, Heb. i. 6, Rev. i. 5, Lk. ii. 7, Heb. xi. 28, xii. 23. God resolved to surround His eternal and only-begotten Son by **many** created sons whom He would not be ashamed to call **brethren.** These words suggest that the glorification of the sons of God will add glory to the eternal Son. And this is an additional assurance that this purpose will be accomplished.

30. Accomplishment of this purpose already begun. **He also called**: by means of the Gospel: 2 Th. ii. 14. **He also justified**: through faith, as in chs. iii. 30, iv. 5. **He also glorified**: as in *v.* 17. So certain to Paul is the glory awaiting the sons of God that he speaks of it as already theirs. So Eph. ii. 6. While he ponders the eternal purpose of God, he forgets distinctions of time, and looks back upon it as actually accomplished. The

tense reveals the fulness of his confidence. These words do not imply or suggest that the predestination, call, justification, and glorification are co-extensive. Paul thinks only of his readers, of God's eternal purpose to make them sharers of the glory of Christ, and of the steps by which He is accomplishing this purpose. All else is irrelevant to the matter in hand, which is not to teach further about the way of salvation, but to give additional proof of the glory awaiting the sons of God.

We see now the importance of the words *whom He foreknew*. If the accomplishment of a man's purpose depends on the action of another, he is uncertain about it. With us, contingency and certainty cannot go together: with God, they can. For God *foreknew* from eternity what every man will do. When the world was but a thought in the Creator's mind, every man in all his circumstances and inward and outward conduct stood before His eye. He saw man in sin, and resolved to save (1 Pet. i. 20) through the blood of Christ and through the Gospel all whom He foresaw putting faith in Christ and walking perseveringly in His steps. He also resolved to change them into the moral likeness of Christ and to make them sharers of His eternal glory.

We must carefully avoid the error of supposing that our foreseen faith moved God to predestine us to salvation. He was moved to save us simply by our foreseen misery and His own mercy: 2 Tim. i. 9, Tit. iii. 5. Having resolved to save, He was moved by His infinite wisdom and undeserved favour to select persevering faith as the condition of salvation. And, having chosen this condition, He now uses means to lead men to repentance and faith. So far from our faith being a ground, it is a result, of God's predestination. But although salvation is altogether a result of God's eternal purpose, and in no way whatever a result of anything we have done or can do, God nevertheless permits man to resist effectually the influences which lead to salvation. He thus makes the salvation of each individual dependent on his self-surrender to these divine influences. But since this self-surrender or rejection was foreseen, God knew from the beginning the exact result of the death of Christ.

On Paul's doctrine of Predestination, see further in the note at end of ch. ix.

Such is God's purpose. It is complete proof that He (*v.* 31) is on our side. Now this purpose is earlier than the universe around us, earlier than the social and natural forces which sometimes press so heavily upon us. And even these social and natural

forces sprang ultimately from Him who formed for us this eternal purpose of blessing and glory. They therefore cannot frustrate this purpose. Nay, more. God would not, without sufficient motive, permit suffering to fall on those whom from eternity He has resolved to bless. The only explanation of the hardships which now press so heavily on some servants of Christ is that they are the mysterious means by which God is working out His purpose of mercy for them. Thus the purpose which prompted the Gospel call assures us (see *v.* 28) that all things are working together for our good.

31—39. A song of triumph, evoked by the statement in *v.* 28 and the proof of it in *vv.* 29, 30. In it culminates the exposition of the Gospel given in chs. iii. 21—viii. 30.

31. What then shall we say? what inference shall we draw? as in chs. iii. 5, iv. 1. **To these things:** triumphant reference to *vv.* 29, 30. An answer is implied in the next question. We shall infer that **God** is **on our side,** or acting *on our behalf:* and this will make needless the question **who** is **against us?** For all things and persons are under God's control, and therefore cannot hinder the accomplishment of His eternal purpose: and this, we have just seen, is to make us sharers of the glory of Christ. The word *who* suggests that the hardships Paul has in view were in part caused by persons.

32. Another question, suggesting a proof, from the costliness of our salvation, how earnestly God is on our side. **He did not spare:** so 2 Pet. ii. 4, 5; 1 Cor. vii. 28: did not shield from suffering. **His own Son:** the point of the argument. Cp. ch. v. 10. **Gave Him up:** to suffering and death: as in ch. iv. 25. **On behalf of us all:** supporting the words *on our behalf* in *v.* 31. In the words *us all*, Paul thinks probably only of himself and his readers; although his words here are true in a wider sense. His question here assumes, and uses as a ground for confident hope, the important teaching in chs. iii. 25, v. 6—10. **How shall he not etc.?** practical inference from the foregoing words, put into the form of a question. If He has done the one, it is impossible to doubt that He will do the other. **With Him:** the gift of Christ to die for us, and all other gifts, here placed in closest connection. **Give-by-His-grace:** cognate to the word in chs. i. 11, v. 15, 16, vi. 23. **All things:** i.e. all things good for us. The undeserved favour of God, which for our sake has already given up to death *His own Son*, will not hold back from us any good thing. For, compared with that supreme gift, all else is nothing.

33, 34. The gift of Christ recalls our sins which made needful His death. The doubt thus suggested, Paul meets by reminding his readers that they are **God's chosen** (or *elect*) **ones.** So chs. ix. 11, xi. 5, and note under ch. ix. 11. To **bring a charge** against such, is to dispute the justice of God's choice. For it is **God who justifies.** The second question, **Who** is **he that condemns?** supports *who shall bring a charge?* just as *God that justifies* supports *God's chosen ones.* To *bring a charge* against believers, is to *condemn* those whom God has *justified* and *chosen* to be His own. Thus God's decree of justification silences all doubt, even that suggested by memory of our past sin. **Christ who died:** recalling the argument in *v.* 32. **But rather:** throwing into conspicuous prominence the fact that the crucified **was** also **raised.** The words *from the dead* (R.V.) found in some good MSS. are doubtful and do not add to the sense. **Who is at** the **right hand of God:** following the risen One to His present place of glory: so Col. iii. 1—4. **Intercedes** (same word in *vv.* 26, 27) **on our behalf:** same phrase and thought in Heb. vii. 25. Notice the stately gradation: *died . . . was raised . . . at* the *right hand of God . . . intercedes for us.* These great facts are abundant proof that (*v.* 31) God is on our side and that therefore no one can injure us.

35, 36. Two final and triumphant questions. **The love of Christ:** His love to us: cp. *v.* 37, Gal. ii. 20. **Who?** as in *v.* 31. *Who* **shall separate?** put us beyond reach of Christ and thus deprive us of the practical effect of His love. The various hardships of the present life are paraded as powerless captives. **Affliction, helplessness:** as in ch. ii. 9. At the word **sword,** Paul breaks off his question to quote Ps. xliv. 22, which reminds us that the death of God's people by the sword is no new thing. The Psalm refers to men who, though faithful to God, suffered military disaster. Their enemies **reckoned** them **as sheep** ready for **slaughter:** and the work of death went on **all the day.** This destruction was a result of loyalty to God: **on account of Thee.** Although we do not know the facts referred to, we learn that there were men in that day who died because they served God, and were thus forerunners of the Christian martyrs. This is another harmony of the old and new.

37. We-more-than-conquer: for all things, including our enemies and hardships, are (*v.* 28) working together with us for good. **Through Him that loved us:** Christ: see *v.* 35, 1 Cor. xv. 57: cp. Gal. ii. 20, Eph. v. 25. The victory is from God, through Christ, and through the death which reveals His love to us.

38, 39. A confident answer to the question in *v.* 35. **Persuaded:** deliberate conviction: same word in ch. xv. 14, 2 Tim. i. 5, 12. **Death:** put first, because, to the early Christians, ever imminent. Yet **life** also has its perils. **Principalities:** those who among **angels** hold superior rank, as angel-princes or archangels: as in Eph. i. 21, iii. 10, Col. i. 16, ii. 10, of good angels; and in 1 Cor. xv. 24, Eph. vi. 12, Col. ii. 15, of bad ones. Doubtless they were "the chief princes" of Dan. x. 13, 21, xii. 1. It is not easy to decide whether Paul refers to good or bad angels, or angels without thought of moral character. Gal. i. 8 makes even the first supposition possible. But since Paul uses the word for *angels* good or bad, leaving the context to determine which, he probably refers here simply to angelic power (cp. *will be able*) of whatever kind. Not even angels are strong enough to tear us from God. **Things present:** be they what they may. **Things coming:** the uncertain possibilities of the future. **Powers:** kings, magistrates, etc. **Height:** to which we look up with helpless fear. **Depth:** the chasm which opens ready to engulf us: cp. Eph. iii. 18. **Able to separate us:** stronger than *will separate* in *v.* 35. **Love of God . . . in Christ Jesus:** the love of God to man manifested in the historic human personality of Christ and apprehended by inward contact with **our** risen **Lord.** "Neither the hand of death nor the events of a prolonged life, nor angels of ordinary or extraordinary rank, neither the hardships of the present nor the uncertainties of the future, nor powers of any kind, neither exaltation or any exalted being nor deepest abasement, nor anything else which God has made, can put us beyond reach of that love of God which shone upon us in the person and from the cross of Christ and is with us now by vital union with Him." And, since our enemies cannot separate us from Him, they are powerless to hurt us. We are more than conquerors. That they are permitted by our Father in heaven to approach us, is proof that they are working out for us those purposes of mercy and glory which He formed for us before the world was, and for which He made the world. Thus, to us who love God, underneath apparent discord is profound harmony, a harmony of blessing.

We have in *vv.* 31—39 the first prolonged outburst of Christian emotion. It is evoked by contemplation of the hardships and perils of the present life. As Paul surveys his enemies, numerous and various, passing before him in long procession but unable to injure, he realises the completeness of the victory which God has given. So in all ages the loudest songs of triumph have been

sung in the face of the fiercest foes by men who, while the powers of darkness were doing their worst, found themselves more than conquerors. But we have here much more than emotion. Each verse is full of argument: for Paul's exultation rests on solid objective grounds. He looks, not at himself, but at God and Christ; he remembers the purpose which God formed before the world was, and the price He paid to accomplish it; and from this infers that God is on his side and will withhold from him no good thing. The accusations of enemies and of conscience are silenced by the Gospel in which God proclaims our justification and by Paul's assured conviction that to save us from punishment Christ died, and now intercedes. Thus the historic facts of Christ's death and resurrection attest the love of Christ and of God. And from that love no foe, human or superhuman, can tear us.

The relation between this confidence of final victory and Paul's solemn warning that unless his readers continue in faith they will fall and finally perish, will be discussed under ch. xi. 24.

DIVISION III., and with it Paul's exposition of the Gospel, are now complete. In DIV. I., he proved that all men are exposed to punishment. In DIV. II., he asserted justification through faith, and through the death of Christ; and proved that justification through faith, which overthrows all Jewish boasting, is in harmony with God's recorded treatment of Abraham, and that justification through the death of Christ gives us a hope of glory based on God's love, and is a counterpart, and the only conceivable explanation, of the entrance of death through Adam's sin. DIV. III. is introduced by an objection that the teaching of DIV. II. leads to immorality. This objection, Paul meets, not by guarding or qualifying the doctrine of justification, but by putting beside it the doctrine that God wills us to live, by inward union with Christ, a life like His life of devotion to God. This new life, we obtain by reckoning it to be ours. Paul justifies the gift of it to men condemned by the Law, by showing that in Christ we are set free from the dominion of the Law; and justifies the Law which condemns us by asserting that our own best intelligence approves its judgment. He goes on to say that of this new life the Spirit of God is the guiding principle; and proves that the Spirit within us is a sure pledge of the glory awaiting us. This is not disproved by our afflictions: for our present state is one, not of possession, but of hope. And our hope is confirmed by the state of the

natural world around us, and by our divinely-taught yearnings for the accomplishment of the promises. God is on our side: therefore the hardships of life cannot hurt us, but are working out our good.

DIVISIONS II. and III. are a logical development of five great doctrines, viz. (1) that God accepts as righteous all who believe the Gospel, stated in ch. iii. 21, 22; (2) by means of the death of the Son of God, in *vv.* 24—26; (3) that God designs us to be, by union with Christ, sharers of the life of Christ, a life devoted to God, in ch. vi. 3—10; (4) that this life becomes ours by the reckoning of faith, in *v.* 11; (5) through the inward presence and guidance of the Holy Spirit, in ch. viii. 2—16. As thus stated, Doct. 1 implies a personal God who pardons sin; Doct. 2 implies that in a unique sense Christ is the Son of God, and Doct. 3 implies His unreserved devotion to God; Doctrines 1 and 4 assert comprehensively salvation through faith; and Doct. 5 assumes an inward consciousness of the presence of the Spirit of God. In other words, we have here Justification through Faith, and through the Death of Christ, Sanctification in Christ, through Faith, and in the Holy Spirit. We have also found abundant proof that each of these doctrines, or doctrine equivalent, was actually taught by Christ. And evidently they were accepted by Paul, and asserted without proof but with perfect confidence, because he believed that they had been previously taught by Christ. If we accept these doctrines, the reasoning in DIVISIONS II. and III. will compel us to accept the teaching of the whole epistle.

Only one subject remains: the bearing of these doctrines on the Old Covenant, and on the condition and prospects of the Jews, its living representatives.

DIVISION IV

HARMONY OF THE OLD AND NEW

CHS. IX.—XI

SECTION XXVII

PAUL'S SORROW FOR THE JEWS

CH. IX. 1—5

I speak truth in Christ, I do not lie, my conscience bearing joint-witness with me in the *Holy Spirit,* [2] *that I have great sorrow, and my heart has ceaseless pain.* [3] *For I could wish to be my own self Anathema from Christ on behalf of my brethren, my kinsmen according to flesh;* [4] *who are Israelites, whose* is *the Adoption and the Glory and the Covenants, and the Lawgiving and the Service and the Promises;* [5] *whose* are *the Fathers, and from whom* came *the Christ according to flesh. God who is over all* be *blessed for ever. Amen.*

1. The sudden change of tone and subject takes us by surprise, and introduces a new division of the epistle. **Truth:** see under ch. i. 18. **Speak in Christ:** so 2 Cor. ii. 17, xii. 19. Paul's words were prompted by inward union with Christ. **My conscience:** as in ch. ii. 15. **In the Holy Spirit:** as in ch. viii. 15, 1 Cor. xii. 3. Paul appeals to that faculty by which he contemplates his own inner self; and claims that in the testimony it now bears it is guided by the Holy Spirit. They who knew Paul could not resist this appeal to Christ, in union with whom they knew that he lived and spoke, and to the Spirit who evidently permeated his entire life and thought. This solemn appeal prepares us for a statement important and unlikely.

2. Great sorrow to me and ceaseless pain to my heart. In *vv.* 35—39, Paul's enemies marched, conquered and powerless, in stately procession before our eyes. At sight of them, the conqueror burst into a song of triumph, and of praise to Him who gave the victory. Suddenly the song ceases, and the minstrel, whose lips spoke forth a moment ago the exultation

of his heart, now tells us that he has great and constant sadness. So unexpected is this statement that Paul appeals in proof of it to Christ, whose life and nature he shares, and to the Spirit who directs his words and actions.

3. A vain sacrifice to which Paul's sorrow prompts him, revealing its intensity; and the persons for whom he is sad. **I could wish**, or *was wishing* or *praying:* same verb in 2 Cor. xiii. 7, 9, Acts xxvi. 29, xxvii. 29. **Anathema:** Gal. i. 8, 9, 1 Cor. xii. 3, xvi. 22, Acts xxiii. 14. So (LXX.) Dt. vii. 26, xiii. 15, 17, Josh. vi. 17, 21, vii. 1, 11, 15, and frequently; denoting objects irrevocably devoted to God, and if living to be put to death. Paul's heart would prompt him to be separated **from Christ** and thus *accursed*, if this would save Israel. **My brethren:** the ties of blood still binding Paul's heart, even though he is a Jew and the Jews as a nation have rejected Christ. **According to flesh:** distinguishing the persons referred to from brethren in Christ.

Paul weeps for his countrymen. He who is unmoved by hunger and imminent death is so deeply moved by their position that, to save them, he would almost expose himself to the anger of God. A similar case of self-devotion in Ex. xxxii. 32. Perhaps in these moments Paul and Moses shared most fully the mind of Him who actually did (Gal. iii. 13, Mt. xxvii. 46) what their hearts vainly prompted them to do. The greatness of Paul's sorrow for the Jews and the sacrifice to which it prompts him attest how terrible was their position. What was it in them which caused him such sorrow? No temporal calamity. This would not suggest such sacrifice to a man before whose eyes the world itself was passing away. Nor can he refer to believing Jews who were brethren in Christ and heirs of the coming glory, but only to the mass of the nation who had rejected Christ. Since Paul does not speak of any special calamity about to befall them, we must seek, and we shall find, an explanation of his sorrow in his foregoing teaching.

Paul has taught in ch. iii. 9, 19 that all men of all nations are, apart from Christ, exposed to punishment; and in ch. i. 16 etc. that the salvation announced by Christ is for those who believe. The mass of the Jews utterly rejected this offered salvation. Therefore, if Paul's teaching be correct, they are under the anger of God and on the way to destruction. This is due, not to rejection by God, but to their own unbelief: chs. xi. 1, ix. 32. Nor is their case hopeless: chs. x. 1, xi. 23. But most of them show no signs whatever of turning to Christ.

Therefore Paul was sad for them, just as many to-day, who themselves rejoice amid the trials of life in the smile of God, are sad because some whom they love are away from Christ and are treading the path of sin and ruin. It is in moments when our joy in Christ is brightest and when we feel ourselves to be completely victorious over life with its uncertainties and death with its terrors that this sadness comes to us with greatest bitterness. Paul's sudden sorrow in the midst of Christian exultation is true to the deepest and noblest instincts of our renewed nature.

4. As Paul ponders the position of his brethren, their many and great advantages pass in review before him. **Israelites**: a favourite name of honour: ch. xi. 1, 2 Cor. xi. 22, Ph. iii. 5, Jno. i. 47, Dt. v. 1, vi. 3, 4. **Adoption**: same word in ch. viii. 15, 23. Cp. Ex. iv. 22f, "Israel is My firstborn son . . . let My son go;" and Dt. xiv. 1, "ye are sons to Jehovah your God." Out of all nations, God chose Israel to occupy this special relation to Himself. **The Glory**: the supernatural brightness in which God manifested His presence: Ex. xix. 16, xxiv. 10, 16, 17, xl. 34—38. It was proof of *the adoption*. *The adoption and the glory* recall **the** two **Covenants** made in the wilderness: Ex. xix. 5, xxiv. 7, 8, xxxiv. 27; and Dt. xxix. 1. And these recall the earlier covenant with Abraham, on which they rested: Gen. xv. 18, xvii. 2—14, Ex. ii. 24, vi. 4, Dt. vi. 10. The plural *covenants* marks off a triplet, which is followed by a second and corresponding triplet. **The Lawgiving**: cognate verb in Heb. vii. 11, viii. 6. By giving a law, God acted as father to His adopted children. **The Service**: same word in ch. xii. 1, Heb. ix. 1, 6, Jno. xvi. 2: a cognate verb in Rom. i. 9, 25, Mt. iv. 10, Acts vii. 7, 42, xxiv. 14, xxvi. 7, xxvii. 23. It denotes the ritual in which Israel showed reverence to God who manifested Himself in visible *glory*. **The Promises**: chs. xv. 8, iv. 13, 14, 16, 20, Gal. iii. 14, 16, 17, 18, 21, 22, 29. They were a great feature of *the covenants:* so Eph. ii. 12, "covenants of promise." These promises had been the solace and strength of Israel during ages of disaster.

5. Whose etc.: stately repetition, introducing another class of advantages. **The Fathers**: chiefly Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, who received the promises for themselves and their children: Jno. vii. 22, Acts vii. 32, Ex. iii. 13: cp. Rom. iv. 13. **From whom,** or *from among whom*. Paul cannot say, *Whose* is *Christ*. **The Christ**: *the anointed* and thus designated Monarch of the eternal kingdom of God. **According to flesh**: as in *v.* 3, limiting

the foregoing assertion to the bodily origin of Christ. This limitation suggests another element in Him which did not spring from Israel. Yet even this outward nearness to the Light of the world was the greatest of the many privileges of Israel.

Such were the spiritual advantages of those for whom Paul mourns. They belonged to the people whom God had adopted to be specially His own, in whose midst He had manifested Himself in visible splendour, and to whom He had bound Himself by covenant. They possessed the will of God in written form. Before their eyes, from childhood, the ritual set forth in outline the great truths now fully revealed. To them the coming of the Deliverer had been announced; and they were heirs of the promises made to the father of the faithful. And, more than all, in their midst the Anointed One had appeared, had presented the credentials of His royalty, and laid the foundation of His kingdom.

God, who is over all: solemn assertion of the existence of One who rules over and disposes all things according to His will: Eph. i. 11, iv. 6. **Blessed for ever** (or *for the ages*). **Amen.** Same words in ch. i. 25: see under chs. xi. 36, xvi. 27.

At the mention of the name and birth of Christ, Paul cannot refrain from an outburst of praise to the great Ruler of the world who chose Israel, and gave Christ to be born in Paul's own day and nation. His sorrow for the Jews implies that their religious advantages, which were designed to lead them to Christ, and the birth of Christ in their midst had utterly failed to profit them. Therefore, had the sentence ended here, it might have appeared that these advantages were of little worth. But they were infinitely the greatest advantages ever bestowed on any nation. And to Paul and the Jewish Christians they had actually been the means of infinite blessing. Had God chosen Britain instead of Judæa to be the birthplace of His Son, Paul might have been, not writing this epistle, but offering a human sacrifice to the god of the forest. Therefore, while he weeps for the Jews, he defends the worth of their slighted privileges by giving praise for them to the supreme Disposer of events, from whom these privileges came. He thus guards, as throughout the epistle he is so ready to do, against the error of underrating religious privileges as well as against that of trusting to them for salvation. And, that Paul was compelled to praise God, even in a moment of deepest sadness, for advantages which the Jews had trampled under foot, proves how great he felt those advantages to be. Thus his outburst of praise increases the sadness of these verses.

Notice how readily and frequently, and sometimes unexpectedly, Paul turns to God in prayer or praise, even sometimes from matters in which God is not expressly mentioned: so chs. i. 25, xv. 5, 13, xvi. 20, 25, Eph. iii. 20, Ph. iv. 20, 2 Cor. xi. 31, Gal. i. 5; also 1 Pet. iv. 11. To do so, was natural to him because he looked upon everything in its relation to God. Observe also how constantly Paul attributes to God whatever Christ has done: so chs. iii. 25, v. 8, viii. 3, 32. Hence the mention of Christ calls forth praise to God. In 1 Tim. i. 17, we have a similar outburst of praise for his own conversion.

TWO RENDERINGS of *v.* 5*b* are grammatically admissible and worthy of consideration.

(1) *ὁ ὢν ἐπὶ πάντων Θεός* may be in apposition to *ὁ Χριστός*, asserting that He who sprang from Israel *is over all God blessed for ever:* cp. 2 Cor. xi. 31, Jno. i. 18, iii. 13. So Irenæus (quoted on p. 6) and Origen, (both preserved in Latin translations only,) Tertullian, Cyprian, very many early Christian writers, and a large majority of the writers of all ages.

(2) *ὁ ὢν ἐπὶ πάντων Θεός* may be the subject, and *εὐλογητὸς εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας* the predicate, of a new sentence. This exposition is not found in any early Christian writer; but is adopted in the Alex., Ephraim, and Clermont MSS., where we find stops marking off the words in question as a doxology to the Father and spaces proving that the stops are from the first hand. In the Vat. MS. is a stop apparently from a later hand.

Of modern Critical Editors, Tregelles adopts the former, and Lachmann and Tischendorf the latter, exposition. Westcott and Hort here part company, preferring respectively the former and latter expositions. The Revisers place the former in their text, and the latter in their margin. A similar evenly-balanced divergence is found among modern grammarians and expositors.

The general and uncontradicted agreement of early Christian writers has much less weight in reference to exposition than to doctrine; and against it, as supporting exposition (1), must be set the punctuation of some early manuscripts. Certainly this agreement cannot be accepted as decisive. The correct interpretation of the passage before us can be determinedonly by the methods of modern exegesis.

I shall endeavour to show that (2) is in thorough accord with the structure of the passage, with the context, and with the thought of Paul; and that (1), though grammatically correct and making good sense, is made unlikely by the very ambiguity of the passage.

It is objected that εὐλογητός, in the four other doxologies of the N.T. in which it is found, and in many doxologies in the O.T., is always (except Ps. lxviii. 19) put before the name of God. So Lk. i. 68, 2 Cor. i. 3, Eph. i. 3, 1 Pet. i. 3; Gen. ix. 26, 1 Sam. xxv. 32, 33, 39, etc. But no one can say that grammar requires the predicate, even where the copula is suppressed, to stand first. For the contrary, see Rom. xi. 16, xii. 9, Heb. xiii. 4, Lk. x. 2. Of all languages, the Greek would be the last to forbid a man to say *God be blessed* in deviation from the common order *blessed be God*. The objection is simply an appeal to the usage of Paul and of the Bible. What this is, we will consider.

As noticed above, Paul frequently turns suddenly away from the matter in hand to ascribe praise to God. In these cases, whenever the doxology takes the form of an exclamation, it begins with the name of God, and often with a solemn declaration of the divine attribute which prompted it. In this way the writer puts prominently before us the Great Being to whom our attention is suddenly directed. When a doxology occurs at the beginning of a subject, the word of praise comes first, making prominent the idea of praise. So Lk. i. 68, etc. Just so, in Lk. ii. 14, when the angels take up their song, they put the word *glory* first: but when they turn from God on high to men on earth, they give emphasis to the transition by putting the words *upon earth* before the word *peace*. They thus deviate, in the latter case from the universal, in the former from the almost universal, usage of the New Testament: cp. Lk. x. 5, Jno. xx. 19, 21, 26. But they deviate for a sufficient reason.

The peculiarity of the case before us is, not the position, but the presence, of the word *blessed*. Elsewhere it is found in the N.T. only in doxologies which begin a subject. All others, and they are frequent with Paul, take the form "to God be glory." But surely the use here of the word *blessed* need not surprise us. And, if used, it must follow *God over all*. Otherwise Paul would deviate from his own unvarying use in doxologies at the end of a subject, which are so frequent with him, a use flowing naturally from the order of thought; and would direct our chief attention to the act of praise instead of the Object of praise.

On the other hand, although εὐλογημένος is used of Christ in Mt. xxi. 9, xxiii. 39, etc., εὐλογητός never is. (For the distinction, see Gen. xiv. 19, 20, LXX.) And elsewhere Paul uses the word *God*, never of the Son, but as a distinctive title of the Father, even to distinguish Him from the Son. So Rom. xvi. 27,

1 Tim. i. 17, 1 Cor. viii. 6, Eph. iv. 6. But these objections to (1) are not decisive. For, as I hope to show in Diss. i., Paul looked upon Christ as sharing to the full the divine nature of the Father. There is therefore no reason why he should not deviate from his custom and speak of Christ, though it be only once, as εὐλογητός and Θεός, terms elsewhere reserved for the Father. Cp. Jno. xx. 28, i. 1, and probably *v.* 18. Interpret it as we may, this passage differs from the usage of Paul. Consequently, no argument can be based on the unusual order of the words.

According to exposition (1), the word ὤν is an emphatic assertion that Christ is *over all*, *God*, and *blessed for ever*. In (2) it asserts that *over all* there exists one who bears the title *God* and is *blessed for ever*. The words ὢν ἐπὶ πάντων are, as in ch. i. 7, 1 Cor. iii. 7, put for emphasis between the article and its substantive, according to constant Greek usage. The words *over all* recall Eph. iv. 6, where they refer to the Father.

The words ὁ ὢν εὐλογητὸς εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας in 2 Cor. xi. 31 give no support to (1). For they cannot by themselves form a complete sentence; and must therefore be in apposition to the foregoing nominative. And the context shows plainly to whom the words refer. Of this we should have been uncertain had Paul written ὅς ἐστιν as in Rom. i. 25. But the clause before us has in itself all the elements of a complete sentence; and therefore we cannot join it to the previous sentence, and thus change its meaning altogether, without a good reason. Had Paul wished to teach here that Christ is God, he might have done so, and put his meaning beyond doubt, by writing ὅς ἐστιν as in ch. i. 25.

The words *according to flesh* suggest another side of Christ's nature which did not descend from Israel. But this suggestion is so clear that it does not need express assertion. And there is nothing in the form of the words following, as there was in ch. i. 4, which calls attention to it. Nor can it be said that these words were inserted only to provoke the contrast. For the insertion of them is otherwise sufficiently accounted for. Even when narrating the privileges of Israel, Paul cannot go beyond the truth: and the truth requires this limitation. His sorrow for his brethren will not let him forget that Christ belongs to them only by outward bodily descent. But even this outward nearness to Him was the greatest of their many advantages.

How fully exposition (2) accords with the whole context and with the usage and thought of Paul, I have already attempted to show. To say that an outburst of praise would be out of place

in a passage so full of sadness, is to overlook the pathos of these words. That the slighted privileges of Israel call forth a song from a heart smitten with deepest sorrow on their account, reveals their greatness and the terrible position of those who trample them under foot. As little inappropriate is this song of praise as will be the Hallelujahs of the Day of Judgment: Rev. xix. 1—7. And that Paul rises unexpectedly from mention of Christ to praise to God, is in complete harmony with his constant mode of thought, e.g. 1 Cor. xv. 28, xi. 3, iii. 23.

So far then we have seen that the exposition I have adopted is not open to objection on the ground of grammar, the context, or the usage and thought of Paul. I shall now bring reasons for believing, with a confidence approaching certainty, that it conveys the actual thought and purpose of Paul.

Had Paul intended to deviate from his otherwise unvarying custom and to speak of Christ as *God*, he must have done so with a set and serious purpose of asserting the divinity of Christ. And, if so, he would have used words which no one could misunderstand. In a similar case, Jno. i. 1, we find language which excludes all doubt. In the passage before us, the words ὅς ἐστιν, as in Rom. i. 25, would have given equal certainty. But Paul did not use them. Again, in the passages which set forth expressly the nature of the Son, e.g. ch. i. 4, Ph. ii. 6, Col. i. 15, Paul does not call Him *God:* and in each of them the subordination of the Son to the Father is very conspicuous. But here, if we adopt the traditional exposition, there is no mention whatever of the Father, and without such mention there is given to the Son the loftiest title found in the Bible; in other words, we should have here the divinity of Christ, asserted with a definiteness not found elsewhere in the writings or addresses of Paul, and not correlated to the unique supremacy of the Father. This is altogether inconsistent with the whole thought of Paul.

Moreover, Paul is not discussing here the dignity of Christ, but mentions Him casually in an exposition of the present position of the Jews. In such a passage, it is much more likely that he would deviate from his common mode of expression, and write once *God* be *blessed* instead of "To God be glory," than that in a passage not referring specially to the nature of Christ he would assert, what he nowhere else explicitly asserts, that Christ is God, and assert it in language which may mean either this or something quite different.

In any case, the passage before us cannot be appealed to in

proof of the divinity of Christ. For even those who so interpret it admit that their interpretation is open to doubt: and it is very unsafe to build important doctrine on an uncertain foundation. On the other hand, as I interpret them, these words reveal, by making them matter of praise to God, the greatness of the privileges which the Jews had trampled under foot.

SECTION XXVIII

YET GOD IS NOT UNFAITHFUL

CH. IX. 6—13

But not as though the word of God has fallen through. For not all they who are *from Israel*, are *these Israel.* [7] *Neither because they are seed of Abraham* are *all children; "but in Isaac will a seed be called for thee."* [8] *That is, not the children of the flesh*, not *these* are *children of God; but the children of the promise are reckoned for a seed.* [9] *For* a word *of promise this word is, "At this season I will come; and for Sarah* there *shall be a son."*

[10] *And not only* so, *but also Rebecca, having conceived from one, Isaac our father—*[11] *for* they *not yet having been born, nor having done anything good or bad, in order that the purpose of God according to election might continue, not from works but from Him that calls,* [12] *it was said to her that "The greater will be servant to the less;"* [13] *according as it is written, "Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated."*

6. The word of God: His promises to Abraham, e.g. Gen. xii. 2, 3, xiii. 16, xxii. 17, 18. Cp. Rom. iv. 13—17. Paul's sorrow and the present sad position of the unbelieving Jews do *not* involve anything *like* a failure of *the word of God* to Abraham. He thus challenges an objection to the Gospel, viz. that if it be true God has broken the great promises on which rest the hopes of

Israel. The Gospel promises infinite blessing to all who believe in Christ, and threatens destruction to those who reject Him. But with Abraham's seed God made an eternal covenant, and promised to be their God for ever: Gen. xvii. 7. It might be objected that, by limiting salvation to those that believe, the Gospel implies the partial failure of the ancient promises. Paul does not hesitate to admit that these promises on which the Jews base their claims are *the word of God*. But he now declares, and in *vv.* 7—13 will prove, that the sad position of the Jews does not involve failure of the promises; that so long as they continue in their present unbelief, they are outside the number of those for whom the promises were given.

For not all etc.: commencement of this proof. **They from Israel**: Jacob's descendants. So ch. i. 3: "*from* David's seed." Are **Israel**: sharers with their father Israel of the blessings promised to the seed of Abraham.

7—9. An unexpected transition from the sons of Israel to those of *Abraham*, an assertion touching the latter similar to that made in *v.* 6 touching the former. We shall find, in *vv.* 7—9, that the assertion about Abraham proves that about Israel.

7. Seed of Abraham: natural descendants, corresponding to *they of Israel* in *v.* 6. **Children**: heirs of Abraham's rights: cp. ch. viii. 17. It corresponds with *are Israel:* cp. Jno. viii. 39. **But in Isaac etc.**: quotation of Gen. xxi. 12, proving the foregoing assertion: same quotation in Heb. xi. 18. When God bid Abraham send away Ishmael, He promised that from *Isaac* should arise a posterity who would **be called** by Abraham's name and inherit the promises made to his *seed*. The quoted text evidently limits the promises to Isaac and his children: cp. Gen. xvii. 19—21. It therefore proves that not all the natural offspring are Abraham's children and heirs.

8. Exposition of the foregoing quotation, and of the principle involved in it. **Not the children of the flesh**: descendants born according to the natural laws of the human body. **Children of God**: recalling ch. viii. 16. Since Paul is deducing a general principle applicable to the Jews of his own day, he expresses it in N.T. form. He here asserts that natural descent from Abraham does not place a man in a new relation to *God*. This explains the exclusion of Ishmael. **Children of the promise**: born, as Isaac was, in fulfilment of a promise of God and therefore by supernatural power. **Reckoned**: as in chs. ii. 3, iv. 3—6.

9. Proof that Isaac is a child *of promise*. It therefore supports,

from his case, the general principle asserted in *v.* 8. Paul quotes from Gen. xviii. 10 a definite **promise** of **a son for Sarah.**

The objection challenged in *v.* 6 assumes that the Jews claim the blessings promised to Abraham on the ground that they are descendants of Israel and that if these blessings be denied them the promises of God have failed. Paul reminds us that this claim is not admitted in the case of Abraham's children: for no Jew asserts that both his sons were included in God's covenant with their father. Nay more. The claim of the unbelieving Jews is precisely the same as that of Ishmael; whereas they who believe in Christ hold a position analogous to that of Isaac. For they, like him, have been born, not by natural generation, but in fulfilment of a special promise of God. If the Gospel be true, even though some Israelites be excluded from the blessings promised to their nation, God is only acting in reference to Israel's sons as He acted of old to the sons of Abraham.

10. Another proof of the same, from the family of **Isaac. Not only** was a distinction made between the sons of Sarah and Hagar, but between the sons of **Rebecca** and *Isaac*, both parents being the same. Paul thus evades a possible objection that Ishmael was a bondwoman's child.

11, 12. Further exposition of this second case. **Not yet having been born etc.:** excluding all possibility of human merit as influencing God's selection. This is emphasised by the words **not having done anything good or bad. The purpose of God:** the eternal purpose revealed in God's action in the families of Abraham and Isaac. **Election:** cognate to *elect* in ch. viii. 33: the selection of a smaller out of a larger number. God acted on this principle, i.e. **according to** *election*, when, instead of receiving into His covenant both Isaac and Ishmael, he took Isaac only. He acted on the same principle when he took Jacob and left Esau. Inasmuch as whatever God does in time He purposed from eternity, Paul speaks of God's action as resulting from a *purpose according to election*. And, inasmuch as, in both patriarchal families, He acted on the same principle of selection, Paul says that He did so in the second case **in order that** *the purpose according to election* **might continue,** i.e. in order to act in the family of Isaac as He had already acted in the family of Abraham. The word *continue* calls attention to a permanent element in the divine action. **Not from works, but from Him that calls:** source of this elective purpose. It was not prompted by any *works* of man, past or foreseen, but

had its origin simply in God, who *calls* to Himself whom He will: cp. 2 Tim. i. 9, Tit. iii. 5. **It was said to her:** as recorded in Gen. xxv. 23. **Greater . . . less:** perhaps equivalent to older and younger; cp. chs. xxix. 16, x. 21: probably designed to be an enigma to Rebecca, to be explained only by fulfilment. It evidently means that the one least likely should have the pre-eminence. So important in Paul's thought, as a permanent element in divine administration, was the principle of selection as contrasted with indiscriminate blessing that he represents the maintenance of this principle as a purpose of the famous words spoken to Rebecca before her children were born. Subsequent history proves that these words were a limitation of the covenant to Jacob and his children. Had God bestowed the promised blessings on both sons of Isaac, He would have cast aside the elective purpose adopted in His dealings with the family of Abraham.

13. That Paul stated correctly in *v.* 12 God's purpose in speaking to Rebecca, he now proves by quoting Mal. i. 2. The words **Esau I hated** are expounded by those following, "they shall build, but I will throw down; and they shall call them Border of wickedness, and The people with whom God is angry for ever." Cp. Ps. v. 5, 6: "Thou hatest all workers of iniquity." Human passions are attributed to God in order to teach that He acts as men do when influenced by such passions: and only thus can men understand God. So Gen. vi. 6, 1 Sam. xv. 11, where God acts as a man does who has changed his mind. Similarly Prov. xiii. 24: "he that spares his rod hates his son," i.e. he is practically his son's enemy. God acted as a friend to Jacob's descendants and as an adversary to those of Esau: and His words in Mal. i. 2 imply that His different treatment of the two nations was due not to anything they or their respective fathers had done but simply to His undeserved favour to Israel. This is also confirmed by the history of Israel and of Edom. Therefore, looking back on God's words to Rebecca, Paul may justly say that they were spoken in order to declare the great principle that the promised blessings were given apart from human merit.

Notice that in Gen. xxv. 23, Mal. i. 2, and in the O.T. frequently, the fathers and their descendants are identified. In the children the fathers seem to live on: and blessings or curses pronounced on the fathers go down to the children. And the sins of one generation are punished in another: Ex. xvii. 16, 1 Sam. xv. 2,

God's treatment of the sons of Isaac, as of those of Abraham, supports Paul's assertion in *v.* 6 that not all the descendants of Israel are heirs of the promises. By acting on the principle of selection, first in the family of Abraham and then in that of Isaac, God affords a strong presumption that He will do so in the third patriarchal family, that He will accept not all, but a part of, the descendants of Israel. The Gospel proclaims that He does so, that He gives the inheritance only to those who believe in Christ. This seemed to some a failure of the ancient promises. But Paul has now shown that the unbelieving Jews have no better claim than have the descendants of Ishmael, whose claim no Jew would admit.

Again, Paul uses the early date of the prophecy about Isaac's sons, in connection with God's comment in Mal. i. 2 on His treatment of them, to meet another objection to the Gospel. He asserts, in Rom. iii. 27, that justification through faith shuts out all boasting on the ground of works, by bringing down all men, Jews or Gentiles, moral or immoral, to the level of sinners. He now points to a similar disregard of works, as a ground of God's favour, in His treatment of the family of Isaac. If to-day God receives into His family, on the same terms of repentance and faith, the Pharisee and the publican, and rejects all unbelievers, moral or immoral, He only acts as He did when He chose Jacob and rejected Esau before they had done anything good or bad.

This argument however suggests an objection to the Gospel as serious as that which it removes, viz. that if God receive men without reference to previous morality, He is, if not unfaithful, yet unjust. This objection will be stated and answered in *vv.* 14—18. To provoke it, Paul quotes the mysterious words of Mal. i. 2. They teach that even the children of Abraham may be objects of God's fiercest wrath.

The above argument is simply a reply to an objection. Paul shows that this objection to the divine origin of the Gospel tells with equal force against that which all admit to be a revelation from God. As a positive argument, this only raises a presumption, based on the similarity of God's previous action, that He will do what the Gospel announces. But as a reply to the objection that the threatenings of the Gospel are inconsistent with the promises of God, the argument is irresistible.

On the doctrine of Election, see further in the note at the end of this chapter.

SECTION XXIX

NOR IS GOD UNJUST

CH. IX. 14—18

What then shall we say? Is there unrighteousness with God? Be it not so. [15] *For to Moses He says, "I will have mercy on whomsoever I have mercy, and will have compassion on whomsoever I have compassion."* [16] *Therefore it is not of him that desires nor of him that runs, but of God who has mercy.* [17] *For the Scripture says to Pharaoh, "For this very end I raised thee up, in order that I may show forth in thee My power, and in order that My name may be announced in all the earth."* [18] *Therefore on whom He will He has mercy; and whom He will He hardens.*

14. What then etc.? what shall we infer? as in ch. iv. 1, etc. The objection is based, not on God's hatred to Esau, but on the words *not of works.* For no Jew would say that God's treatment of Esau was unjust. **Unrighteousness:** as in ch. i. 18, deviation from the standard of right. In a ruler, we call it *injustice.* While overturning an objection that the Gospel is contrary to the faithfulness of God, Paul has suggested another based on His justice. The unbelieving Jew may say that his own case differs altogether from that of Esau, that, whereas God's words to Rebecca determined only the temporal lot of her sons and left them and their children to be judged at the great day according to their works, the Gospel announces eternal life for those who a few days ago were publicans and harlots, and shuts out from the promises of God some who have lived strictly moral lives. The teaching of Christ put Saul of Tarsus on the same level in reference to salvation as the outcasts around; and offers salvation to all on the same terms. Such teaching seemed to slap in the face morality itself. The Pharisee declares that the justice of God makes inconceivable that such teaching is divine. If the moral unbeliever cannot appeal to the ancient promises, he will appeal to something older than

they, to the eternal justice of God. This objection, Paul meets with a direct denial: **Be it not so.**

15, 16. In proof of this denial, Paul appeals to words spoken **to Moses** at one of the most solemn moments of his life: Ex. xxxiii. 19. **Mercy**: kindness to the unfortunate and helpless: so Rom. xi. 30—32. **Compassion**: a stronger form of the same: so ch. xii. 1. **I-shall-have-***mercy* refers to practical manifestation of mercy; **I-have-mercy,** to the inward disposition. While granting Moses' prayer to see His glory, God asserts the great principle that His gifts are acts of mercy; and that therefore the objects of them are chosen not because of their merit but because of their helplessness and God's pity. God revealed His glory to Moses, not because he deserved it, but because God had compassion on him. Verse 16 is Paul's inference from God's words. **Runs**: intense effort like that of a racer: so 1 Cor. ix. 24. The blessings of the Gospel cannot be obtained by man's desire or effort, however intense, but are gifts of God's mercy. Therefore no work of man gives a claim to them.

A ruler is unjust if in administration he deviates from the proclaimed principles of his government; or if he makes laws contrary to the eternal principles of right and wrong. By proclaiming in the Gospel that He will bestow His favour on believers without consideration of previous morality, God acts on a principle of government announced at Sinai, at the foundation of the Jewish state, a principle which none can call unjust. Its justice is evident from the case of Moses. He had certainly no claim to a revelation of God's glory. God might justly have refused it; and therefore might justly give it to whom He would. Now in the Gospel God proclaims to all believers, of whatever previous character, a still grander revelation of His glory. He thus exercises the prerogative asserted at Sinai. He might justly have delayed for a century the manifestation of Himself in Christ. If so, Paul and his compeers would never have seen it. Was it then unjust in God to choose, apart from all thought of merit, the objects of this revelation? Was it unjust to refuse it to Saul of Tarsus who had desired it so long and sought it so earnestly, and to grant it to Zacchæus and Mary of Magdala?

This quotation is the more suitable because of the argument lying in the word *mercy*. Mercy is not matter of justice, but is better than justice. It is evoked, not by merit, but by helplessness. If God's kindness to a man like Moses, in the noblest moment of his life, was an act of mercy, prompted, not by what Moses had

done, but by divine compassion, then the most moral man has no claim whatever to any gift from God: and God may justly bestow His gifts without reference to human conduct.

17. Proof of the above inference. From the case of **Pharaoh,** Paul will prove that God *hardens* whom He will, and thus put beyond doubt that He has *mercy* on whom He will. **The Scripture says:** as in ch. iv. 3. For the solemn and express words of God, Paul claims no higher authority than that they are the voice of *the Scripture:* so ch. xi. 2, Gal. iv. 30; cp. iii. 8, 22. See Diss. iii. The quoted passage is Ex. ix. 15, 16: "For now had I stretched out My hand and smitten thee and thy people with the pestilence, then hadst thou been cut off from the earth. And indeed for this end I have made thee to continue, to the end that I may show thee My power, and that My name may be declared in all the earth." Instead of destroying the king at once, God permitted him to continue his resistance; and thus reserved him for a more conspicuous overthrow, which would spread to all nations the name and fame of the God of Israel. This purpose was attained: see Josh. ii. 10. Instead of *made to continue*, Paul writes **I raised thee up.** A cognate but less strong word in Acts xiii. 22, 23. Those whom God lifts out of the mass of mankind and puts into a conspicuous position, He is said to *raise-up*. This alteration embodies a correct inference. They who occupy thrones are placed on them by God, to work out His purposes: Dan. iv. 25, Isa. xxxvii. 26. God here says that He had formed a purpose that through Pharaoh His name should be made known. Therefore we cannot doubt that for this end He not only spared his life but placed on the throne of Egypt at that time a man of Pharaoh's character. In later days, to accomplish a different purpose, He put on the throne of Persia (Ezra i. 2) a man of different character. God's perfect foreknowledge (Rom. viii. 29) enabled Him to do all this without interfering with human freedom. He knew beforehand the men to whom He gave the sceptre, and knew that their character would serve His purpose. We therefore infer from Ex. ix. 16 that God placed Pharaoh on the throne in order that his obstinacy and overthrow might be a means of making known to nations around the greatness of God.

18. Inference from God's words to Pharaoh, including, and supplementing, and supporting, the inference in *v.* 16. **Hardens:** so Ex. iv. 21, "I will harden his heart;" also ch. vii. 3. Same or cognate word in Heb. iii. 8, iv. 7, Acts xix. 9; Rom. ii. 5. The heart is *hard* when it is incapable of receiving divine impressions,

To *harden*, is to make less susceptible of such impressions. We may well believe that each refusal made Pharaoh less open to divine influences. Moreover, this progressive hardening was a part of the order of human life, and therefore a divinely-ordained consequence of his refusal to obey, a divinely-ordained punishment of his disobedience. In this real and awful sense it was an act of God. For He ordained that they who reject His influences leading men towards obedience shall by their rejection become less susceptible to such influences. It is also the sinner's own act. For, had he not resisted God, his heart would not have been hardened. This hardening is no more inconsistent with the character of God than is any other kind of punishment. This verse asserts God's right to inflict this punishment on whomever He will. In Ex. iv. 21, vii. 3, God announced that He would inflict it on Pharaoh: and no Jew would deny the justice of the punishment.

Pharaoh was an exact parallel to Paul's opponents: for what he did, they are doing. The only bad thing recorded of him is a repeated rejection of an embassy from God: and they have rejected a more solemn embassy: 2 Cor. v. 20, Heb. ii. 3. Therefore, if God make them, in spite of their morality, a monument of wrath, He will only treat them as He treated Pharaoh. By condemning him, the Jews admitted the justice of their own condemnation.

That God bestows blessing on grounds, not of merit, but of mercy, and that He selects, from men equally guilty, objects of special and conspicuous punishment, does not make in the least uncertain who are the objects of the blessing and the curse. For God's purposes flow from His moral character, and are therefore in harmony with His love and wisdom. Moreover, while reserving to Himself the right to choose the objects of His favour and His anger, He has made known to us His choice. In the Gospel He proclaims mercy for all who believe, of whatever previous character; and destruction for all who reject the offered mercy. We never read of a purpose of God still kept secret. In Christ, the purpose once hidden is now made manifest: ch. xvi. 26, Eph. iii. 5.

Verses 15—18 are full of comfort. When we ask blessing from God, we look, not at our efforts to obtain it or at our merit, but at our helplessness and God's compassion. For His gifts are acts of pure mercy: and He has promised them to all who ask in faith. We therefore ask for them in humble and joyful confidence that God will fulfil His promise.

These verses are also a solemn warning to some who think that because of their morality God cannot justly condemn them to final destruction. He will harden and punish and raise into a monument of anger whom He will. And we read in 2 Th. i. 8 that He will destroy those who obey not the Gospel. The justice of this punishment will appear in the great day: Rom. ii. 5.

Nearly all the difficulties of these verses vanish when we remember that they are a reply to one who objects that it would be unjust for God to destroy those who reject the Gospel. To such objectors, the case of Pharaoh, whose only recorded sin is a rejection of an embassy from God, is a triumphant answer.

SECTION XXX

YET GOD HAS REASON TO FIND FAULT

CH. IX. 19—23

Thou wilt say to me then, Why does He still find fault? For who is resisting His will? [20] *O man, at any rate, who art thou that answerest again to God? Shall the moulded* vessel *say to him that moulded* it, *Why didst thou make me thus?* [21] *Or has not the potter authority over the clay, out of the same lump to make one part a vessel for honour, and another for dishonour?* [22] *Moreover, if God, desiring to show forth His anger and to make known His power, has borne, in much longsuffering, vessels of anger made ready for destruction,* [23] *in order that He may also make known the riches of His glory upon vessels of mercy which He before-prepared for glory*——

19. A last objection, suggested by *v.* 18. The mention of Pharaoh implies that his case is parallel to that of the unbelieving Jews; and suggests that God will harden them and through their hardness accomplish His purposes. The Jew replies, **Why** then does God, after hardening me, **still** (cp. chs. iii. 7, vi. 2) **find fault**, i.e. continue to blame me for sins resulting from hardness

inflicted by God? The force of this objection lies in the second question, which suggests that no one **is resisting His will.** If this suggestion can be made good, if it can be proved that sinners are altogether passive in the hands of God, it will be difficult to understand how He can blame or punish them.

20. Paul indignantly cuts off both questions by reminding the objector that in asking them he sets himself up against God, and by bidding him look at himself and consider who it is that does this. For God has declared that He does find fault with and will punish, for their sins, all unbelievers: and Paul will show that the man before us ought to be the last in the world to call in question God's right to do this. **Shall the moulded** vessel **say to him that moulded** it? word for word from Isa. xxix. 16, LXX. In *v.* 19, the *moulded* vessel of clay is calling the potter to account.

21. Further development of the argument underlying this last question. **The potter:** same word in Jer. xviii. 2, 3, 6, LXX.: in Hebrew it is cognate to the word rendered *moulded* in *v.* 20. **The clay:** same metaphor in Isa. lxiv. 8. The potter is under no obligation to the clay; and therefore may justly make, even out of the same lump, vessels **for honour** and **for dishonour. Vessel:** same word in 2 Tim. ii. 20, 21, Jno. xix. 29, Rev. ii. 27, xviii. 12, Acts ix. 15, 2 Cor. iv. 7. In the Gospel, God declares that from the common mass of mankind He will, by sovereign election, take a part, viz. believers, and cover them with glory: and this verse implies that He will use another part, viz. those who reject the Gospel, to advance by their deep debasement His sovereign purposes. To object to this, is to deny the potter's right over his own clay.

Paul has shown that we have no right to ask the questions in *v.* 19; but he has not answered them. He has not explained why God *still finds fault;* nor disproved the implied assertion that no one *resists His will.* But he has suggested a complete explanation and disproof. For *v.* 21 recalls at once Jer. xviii. 6, 7: "cannot I do with you as this potter does . . . as the clay in the potter's hand, so are ye in My hand." Just as Moses and Pharaoh were parallels to men in Paul's day, so were the men of Jeremiah's day. Because of old God resolved to bless Israel, they thought it impossible for Him to punish them. God asks, Do you deny Me the right of doing what this potter does? He changed his purpose when the clay resisted; cannot I do the same? Now evidently, although the potter's second and lower purpose has been accomplished in the clay, He can still find fault:

for the clay has resisted his original purpose. God's primary purpose for Israel was that they should be saved through Christ. This purpose they resisted. And God formed a second purpose, viz. that through their unbelief and destruction His name may be glorified. The accomplishment of the secondary purpose does not free them from blame for resisting His primary purpose of mercy. Again, in Jer. xviii. 8, 11 God says that even now He will revert to His first purpose of blessing, if Israel will repent. And, as we read in Rom. xi. 23, God is ready to pardon and bless the Jews of Paul's day. Consequently, it is not only their fault, and a result of their resistance to God's purpose, that He formed the purpose of dishonour, but it will be their own further fault if this second purpose is accomplished.

Notice that to Jeremiah God speaks of the clay as a whole: for He refers to the destiny of the nation as a whole. But Paul refers to the salvation of individuals; and therefore speaks of different kinds of vessels from the same lump.

We see now that, while apparently cutting off the objection as one which we have no right to make and one to which he will not condescend to reply, Paul has really, by pointing to the potter and his clay, suggested a complete reply. The parallel is so exact and the reply so complete that we cannot doubt that Paul intended to suggest them. He holds up a mirror in which the Jews may see with their own eyes that they are resisting God's purposes, and are justly exposed to blame and punishment.

God's words to Jeremiah prove that the accomplishment of purposes which are entirely God's may yet in God's sovereign wisdom depend entirely on the conduct of man. They also justify us in thinking of His purposes as successive; although in themselves they are eternal and therefore simultaneous. Only by looking on them as successive can we in any measure comprehend the primary and secondary purposes of God.

22. Further description of the man who replies to God, making still more evident the folly of his reply. **To show-forth**: recalling the same word in *v.* 17. **Desiring etc.**: a definite purpose of **God.** For **His anger** is an essential element of His nature; and its manifestation is for the good of His creatures. And, along with *His anger* against sin, punishment **makes-known His power** to crush all opposition. **Has borne**: as men bear a burden, i.e. refrained from at once destroying something unpleasant to Him. **In much longsuffering**: recalling ch. ii. 4.

God not only delays punishment but takes active means to lead sinners to repentance. **Vessels**: as in *v.* 21. **Of anger . . . of mercy**: whom God views with anger or mercy: so Eph. ii. 3, "children of anger." **Made-ready**: elsewhere, e.g. 1 Cor. i. 10, in a good sense. Their preparation for their destiny was complete. By whom they were made ready, Paul leaves us to infer. Since they were hardened by God, they were by Him *made ready for destruction:* and since their hardening was a punishment of their own resistance, they had, by rejecting the Gospel, made themselves ready. Every act of sin makes the sinner more fit for perdition. **Destruction**: see note on p. 87.

We have here a second answer to the question in *v.* 20, *Who art thou?* The objectors are not only "clay marred in the hand of the potter" but are already objects of God's anger, made ready, by their own sins and by the hardness which follows sin, for destruction. If *v.* 21 recalls Jer. xviii. 1—12, *v.* 22 recalls ch. xix. 1—13. Now God's nature moves Him to punish all sin and to crush all resistance, and thus to make known His anger and power. But He holds back His righteous anger, in order that the wicked may repent and live. Yet while refusing to repent, they complain that He finds fault with them.

23. Another purpose of God's forbearance. **Riches**: recalling ch. ii. 4. **Of His glory**: as in Eph. i. 18, iii. 16. It is the valuable abundance of the manifested splendour which belongs to God. His forbearance is prompted by a desire to show *mercy* to men, to prepare them in the present life for a splendour to be bestowed in the life to come, and thus to make known the infinite resources and the grandeur of His own nature. **Before-prepared**: so Eph. ii. 10: in contrast to *made ready for destruction.* Throughout life everyone is preparing for destruction or for glory. The preparation for glory, being entirely a work of God, is expressly attributed to Him: *whom He before-prepared.*

The sentence occupying *vv.* 22, 23 is broken off at the word *glory*, to make way for a further account of God's treatment of the vessels of mercy: cp. chs. v. 12, vii. 12. We may supply from the foregoing, "Shall the objects of such forbearance call Him to account?"

The men who ask why God finds fault with them are men justly condemned, as Paul proved in chs. i. 18, iii. 20, for their

own sins, whom God might justly destroy at once. To do so, would manifest His righteous anger and great power. But so great is His longsuffering that He permits them to live, and uses means for their salvation. He spares them because He has purposes of mercy, because He wishes to prepare men whom He will cover with His own abundant glory. Therefore He prolongs the world's probation. Can men whose life is spared only because God forbears to act on principles of mere justice, and forbears because of His purpose of mercy to mankind at large, can such men reply to God when He declares what He will do with them? With more justice might a prisoner who but for the king's respite had been put to death complain of prison fare.

How appropriate was Paul's reference to Pharaoh and to the men of Jeremiah's day will appear when we remember the fearful storm which, as Paul wrote these words, was already gathering, soon to burst in overwhelming fury on the house of Israel.

SECTION XXXI

THE PRESENT POSITION OF GENTILES AND JEWS ACCORDS WITH PROPHECY

CH. IX. 24—29

Vessels of mercy which He before-prepared for glory, [24] *whom He also called,* even *us, not only from among Jews, but also from among Gentiles.* [25] *As also in Hosea He says,* "*I will call Not My people, My people; and Not beloved, Beloved.* [26] *And it shall be in the place where it was said to them, No people of Mine are ye, there they shall be called sons of* the *living God.*" [27] *Moreover, Isaiah cries on behalf of Israel,* "*If the number of the sons of Israel be as the sand of the sea, the remnant shall be saved:* [28] *for, accomplishing and cutting short* His *word,* the *Lord will perform* it *on the earth.*" [29] *And according as*

Isaiah has said before, "*Unless* the *Lord of Sabaoth had left us a seed, we had become as Sodom, and we had been made like as Gomorrah.*"

Chapter ix. began with an expression of sorrow that many of the Jews were, if the teaching of chs. i.—viii. be correct, outside the family of God. In reply to the objection that, if so, God's promise has failed, Paul pointed to the cases of Ishmael and Esau. But it was further objected that it would be, if not unfaithful, yet unjust, for God to receive on the same terms, as the Gospel says He will, men good and bad. To this, Paul replied that God's gifts are acts not of justice but of mercy; and that He not only bestows them on whom He will, but also inflicts on whom He will, for His own purposes, special punishment. To the objection that, if so, God has no reason to find fault, he refused to give a reply, and reminded the objector that he was but a vessel of clay, a vessel spared only by the longsuffering of its maker. Paul will now show that the present position of Gentiles and Jews agrees with prophecy.

24. Called: the Gospel summons, as in *v.* 12, viii. 30, 1 Cor. i. 9, vii. 15—24, 2 Th. ii. 14, etc.; cognate to the word *called* in Rom. i. 1, 6, 7. That God has spoken to us, and *called* us to Himself, is the ground of all our hopes. **Jews . . . Gentiles:** whose respective relation to the Kingdom of God is a chief matter of this chapter.

25, 26. Quotations from Hos. ii. 23, 1 respectively. **Call:** to give a name; not to summon as in *v.* 24. The two meanings embody one idea, to cry out a person's name. The word is not found in the text quoted: but it expresses fairly the prophet's meaning. It was probably prompted by the same word, in another sense, in *v.* 24. God bid Hosea, in ch. i. 6, 9, give to two of his children the names *No-mercy* and *No-people-of-mine*, in token that the ten tribes were no longer God's people or objects of His mercy; and made this more conspicuous by saying that He will have mercy upon and save the house of Judah. Afterwards, in ch. ii. 23, He says, "I will have mercy on No-mercy, and I will say to No-people-of-mine, My-people thou art." Still earlier, in ch. i. 10, God says, "in the place where it shall be said to them, No-people-of-mine are ye, it shall be said to them, Sons of the living God are ye." Paul reverses the order of the quotations in order to give concluding prominence to the remarkable phrase **sons of the living God,** so wonderfully anticipating the Gospel of Christ.

Not-beloved: the LXX. rendering of *No-mercy*. **In the place where**: either Palestine or the land of bondage. The very hills and plains which were witnesses of the one declaration will be witnesses of the other.

Paul quotes these words, which refer primarily to the ten tribes, in proof that God, when He called men from the midst of the Gentiles to be vessels of mercy, acted on principles announced by the prophet Hosea. Gentiles could not be more completely aliens than those whom God declared to be neither His people nor objects of His mercy. But Hosea foretold that in days to come God will speak again to the outcasts and call them His sons. In the Gospel, this prophecy finds unexpected and marvellous fulfilment, a fulfilment wider than the promise but in full agreement with its spirit. The glad tidings of salvation and of reception into the family of God, even for outcasts, which through Hosea God promised to announce in days then future, He had actually announced in the Gospel preached by Paul.

27, 28. Another prophecy, from **Isaiah**: ch. x. 22. His words are, "If thy people Israel shall be as the sand of the sea, a remnant among them shall return. Consumption is determined, overflowing with righteousness. For consumption and a determined purpose the Lord Jehovah of armies is working out in the midst of all the earth." The variations in the quotation do not touch the sense. **The number of the sons of Israel**: not found in Isa. x. 22, but taken from Hosea i. 10. **As the sand of the sea**: found in both passages. **Will be saved**: implied in Isaiah's words "shall return." Why only a **remnant** *will be saved*, *v.* 28 explains. **Accomplishing** His **word**: achieving its purpose: cp. ch. ii. 27. **Cutting-short**: a sudden and complete accomplishment. His *word*: God's many threatenings to Israel. Amid the terror inspired by Assyria, the prophet foretells Assyria's coming fall; and looks forward to the day of Israel's deliverance. He sees fulfilled the promise recorded in Gen. xxii. 17, and Israel numerous as the sand of the sea. But he declares emphatically and repeatedly that only a part of the nation will experience the great salvation, and that this part will return to and trust in God. Upon the rest of the nation, God has determined to inflict punishment. He has resolved that a wave of justice shall overflow the land: and, what He has determined, He will do. The **Lord**: see under *v.* 29.

The force of these quotations is evident. If the Gospel be true, many Gentiles are members of the family of God, and many Jews

are, and apparently for ever will be, shut out from that family and from the salvation announced by the Messiah. This latter thought gave Paul deep sorrow. But he has shown that it involves neither unfaithfulness nor injustice in God. And the quotations from Hosea and Isaiah prove that the reception of Gentiles and the limitation of salvation to a part of Israel accord with prophecy.

29. Another quotation from **Isaiah**: ch. i. 9. Things are now **according as** he *foretold*. **Said-before**: either in an earlier part of his prophecy, or before it took place. Probably the latter: for the mere order of Isaiah's prophecies is unimportant. Same word in 2 Cor. vii. 3, xiii. 2, Gal. i. 9, Heb. iv. 7, Mt. xxiv. 25. Paul says that Isaiah's description of things around him was a prophecy of the days of Christ. God treated the covenant people on definite principles. Consequently, His dealings with them at one time were prophetic of times to come. The **Lord**: constant rendering in LXX. for the Hebrew word JEHOVAH, the distinctive name of the God of Israel, never given to others as the name *god* frequently is. Cp. 1 Kgs. xviii. 39, "Jehovah, He is the God." So sacred was this name that in reading the Jews replaced it by the secular title *lord*: same word in Gen. xviii. 12, xlii. 30, 33, etc. And it is so rendered in the Greek, Latin, and some other versions. This rendering causes great confusion in the N.T.: for the same word is both a secular title, as in Acts xvi. 16, 19, 30, and the distinctive title of Christ, as in 1 Cor. viii. 6, and a rendering of the distinctive O.T. name of God. Sometimes, e.g. Rom. x. 12, it is difficult to determine whether the word refers to the Son or the Father. **Sabaoth**: a Hebrew word for *armies*. Same transliteration is very common in (LXX.) the Book of Isaiah, e.g. ch. v. 7, 9, 16, 24. The bidding of *Jehovah of armies* is done by the powers of heaven and earth: cp. Dan. iv. 35, Pss. ciii. 20, 21, cxlviii. 2. **Seed**: from the LXX., instead of *remnant*. The remnant of Judah in the days of Isaiah was a *seed* in which the life of the sacred people was preserved for future generations.

It might be objected to the Gospel that, by making faith the condition of salvation, it practically reduced the covenant people to a small remnant, viz. the believing Jews. But Paul reminds us that in Isaiah's day, by death and captivity, the nation was reduced to a small remnant; and that, but for the help of God, it would then have been as completely destroyed as were Sodom and Gomorrah. Consequently, God is doing now only what Isaiah says He did then.

SECTION XXXII

THROUGH UNBELIEF, THE JEWS HAVE FAILED TO OBTAIN RIGHTEOUSNESS

CH. IX. 30—33

What then shall we say? That Gentiles, the men not pursuing righteousness, have laid hold of righteousness, the righteousness which is *from faith.* [31] *But Israel, while pursuing a law of righteousness, to* such *law has not attained.* [32] *Why? Because* they sought it *not from faith but from works. They stumbled at the stone of stumbling;* [33] *according as it is written, "Behold, I lay in Zion a stone of stumbling and a rock of a snare: and he that believes on Him will not be put to shame."*

30. Righteousness from faith: recalling chs. i. 17, iii. 21, 22, 27—30, which contain the main thesis of the epistle. Since the quotations do not mention either *righteousness* or *faith*, Paul's inference must be drawn from this main thesis. It marks the conclusion of his argument, which is designed to remove objections to this thesis on the ground of the present condition of the Jews. **Gentiles:** not *the Gentiles:* for only a part of them believed. **Pursue:** as in a race: cp. ch. xiv. 19, Ph. iii. 12, 14, 1 Tim. vi. 11, 2 Tim. ii. 22, etc. **Laid-hold-of:** as does a racer: 1 Cor. ix. 24, Ph. iii. 12, 13. **Righteousness:** as in ch. i. 17: the state of him who has the approval of the great Judge. The Gospel proclaims the favour of God to all who believe. Many Gentiles who formerly lived in sin have believed; and, if the Gospel be true, are now accounted righteous by God. They have obtained *the righteousness which* is *from faith.*

31. The contrasted lot of **Israel**, i.e. of the mass of the Jews in contrast to the believing Gentiles. **A law of righteousness:** a standard of conduct, from which they seek the favour of God. This ideal standard some Jews set before themselves; and strove by morality, austerity, or ritual, to **attain** or *come up to* it, i.e. to realise it in themselves and thus attain *righteousness.* But in this effort they failed. Their failure illustrates *v.* 16: cp. Mt. xxi. 31.

32. Reason **why** the Jews have not obtained righteousness, viz. **because** they sought it **not** in God's way **from faith**, i.e. on the

condition of faith, but in a way of their own, **as** though it might be derived **from works. They stumbled etc.:** comment on their failure. **Stumbling:** same word in ch. xiv. 13, 20, 1 Cor. viii. 9; and 1 Pet. ii. 6, referring, as here, to Christ. **Stone** *of stumbling:* one against which men strike their foot. The Jews rejected the Gospel because Christ was not what they expected. He thus became a stone against which the men of Israel, as they ran after righteousness, stumbled. Cp. 1 Cor. i. 23, Mt. xiii. 57.

33. According as etc.: that Christ is a **stone of stumbling,** agrees with prophecy. **Snare:** *skandalon,* the Greek original of our word *scandal:* so chs. xi. 9, xiv. 13, xvi. 17, 1 Cor. i. 23, etc. Cognate verb in Rom. xiv. 21, in some copies; 1 Cor. viii. 13 twice, etc. It denotes a trap in which anyone is caught. **Rock** *of a snare:* one on which when men step they fall and are entrapped. See under same word in ch. xi. 9. Paul weaves together Isa. viii. 14, xxviii. 16. The one reads, "He shall be for a sanctuary; and for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of falling, to the two houses of Israel; for a snare and for a trap to the inhabitants of Jerusalem." Something to be said or done by God will be an occasion of deception and destruction to the Jews. Such were the lowly appearance of Christ and the simplicity of the Gospel. These were a stone against which most of the Jews struck their foot, and a rock on which they slipped and fell: Mt. xi. 6. Isa. xxviii. 16 is, "Behold, I lay in Zion a stone, a stone of proof, the precious corner-stone of a laid foundation. He that believes will not make haste." In days to come, God will lay in Zion, the seat of the kingdom of David, the foundation-stone of a temple or palace. It will be the corner-stone of a firmly-laid foundation, a stone tested and valuable. He that builds on it by faith will not be put to the hurry of flight. **Believes:** in Hebrew, to make firm or sure: he that makes himself firm by resting **on** the firm foundation-stone. **Not put to shame:** as he would be if, in spite of his trust in Christ, he perished. Same word and sense in ch. v. 5.

The apparent carelessness of this quotation does not lessen its value to men familiar with the Old Testament. The quoted passages prove clearly that the foretold salvation is for those who believe; and that it is consistent with the character of God to do that which to some men will become an occasion of falling. In *vv.* 24—29, we saw that the reception of the Gentiles and the limitation of salvation to a part of the Jews are in harmony with prophecy. We now see that faith as the condition of salvation,

and the unfortunate effect of the Gospel on some of the Jews, are also in harmony with it.

A comparison of Rom. ix. 25—33 with 1 Pet. ii. 6—10 suggests that these O.T. quotations were often used by the early Christian teachers.

Verse 32 implies that the reason why one man is unsaved while others are saved is not in God but in himself. So in chs. x. 3, xi. 22, 23, Mt. xxiii. 37. This by no means contradicts *v.* 18, but looks at the same subject from another point. The reason why any one criminal is put to death is, if justice be done, entirely in himself. But the question whether any criminals are to be put to death rests entirely with the legislature. Those who oppose capital punishment may leave out of sight the conduct of the criminal, and speak only of what it is expedient for the government to do. And the moralist may leave out of sight the expediency of capital punishment, and speak only of the consequences of sin. Or again, the motion of the withered leaves of autumn is due altogether to the wind. They do not in the least degree even co-operate to produce their own motion. But the stones on the wayside remain unmoved. The difference arises, not from a difference in the influences brought to bear on the stones and the leaves, but simply from this, that while the leaves yield to, the stones resist, the influences which both alike experience. So with us. That believers are justified at all, springs entirely from the undeserved mercy of God: and every step towards salvation is entirely God's work in them. But the reason why, when some are justlfied, others are not, is that they put themselves by unbelief outside the number of those whom God has determined to save. When Paul replied to the objection that the Gospel is inconsistent with the justice of God, he said that salvation is not a matter of justice, and that God bestows it on whom He will. But when explaining why the Jews have not obtained salvation, he says that the reason is in themselves. Notice also that their position is here attributed, not to their sin, but to their unbelief.

Verses 30—33 help us to understand CHAPTER IX., of which it is a summing up. Paul does not introduce his new matter by laying down, as in chs. i. 16, iii. 21, 22, vi. 3, 4, viii. 3, 4, a foundation-stone of explicit doctrinal statement. Therefore, only from the argument can we learn the exact purpose of the chapter. Paul's aim, as I understand it, is to defend the Gospel expounded in chs. i.—viii. against Jewish objections, and especially against the great objection that if the Gospel be true the mass of

the Jewish nation are outside the blessings promised to their fathers, or in other words to defend the Gospel in view of the fact that many Jews have rejected and many Gentiles have accepted it. In *vv.* 1—5, Paul expresses his sorrow for this fact. But, in *vv.* 6—13, he shows that, painful as it is to himself, it is not inconsistent with the promises of God; nor (*vv.* 14—18) with the declared principles of His government. The reply to Objection 1 is put in a form which provokes Objection 2: the reply to this last suggests Objection 3, viz. that such principles of government destroy human accountability. This objection, *vv.* 19—23 meet. Paul then states in *v.* 24, from the point of view of the Gospel call, what he afterwards, in *vv.* 30, 31, states from the point of view of actual results. In *vv.* 25—29, the statement of *v.* 24 is shown to be in harmony with O.T. prophecy. This is followed in *vv.* 30, 31 by a plain assertion of the fact which in *vv.* 1—5 caused Paul so much sorrow and which throughout ch. ix. he has been harmonizing with the character of God. This fact is in *v.* 32 traced to its cause; and even this cause is in *v.* 33 found to be in harmony with the Old Testament. Thus the whole chapter is a proof that the Gospel expounded in this epistle is in harmony with the earlier revelation.

ELECTION, PREDESTINATION: associated in Eph. i. 4, 5.

In chs. viii. 33, ix. 11, xi. 5, 7, 28, we find the words *elect*, ELECTION; and in 1 Cor. i. 27, 28, Eph. i. 4, Jas. ii. 5, Mk. xiii. 20, Lk. vi. 13, ix. 35, x. 42, xiv. 7, Jno. vi. 70, Acts i. 24, xv. 22, we have the cognate verb *choose*, *chosen*. They denote a mental act by which we take for ourselves a smaller out of a larger number of objects. Choice implies freedom in him who makes it, but is generally determined by the difference between the objects chosen and rejected.

A divine election is prominent in Dt. vii. 6, 7, Ps. xxxiii. 12, Isa. xli. 8, 9, xliii. 20, xliv. 1, lxv. 9, 22. Out of all nations, God chose Israel to be specially His own. From this divine choice resulted all the religious advantages of the Jews. Hence the nation could never forget that it was the chosen people of God. Since the foretold glory was destined only for the faithful ones in Israel, the word was sometimes used specially for them: so Isa. lxv. 9, 15, 22, a stepping-stone to its N.T. use. We have a connecting link, amid O.T. phraseology, in 1 Pet. ii. 9: "a *chosen* race:" so ch. i. 1. Our Lord, in Mt. xxii. 14, xxiv. 22, 31, Lk. xviii. 7, and Paul in Rom. viii. 33, Col. iii. 12,

2 Tim. ii. 10, Tit. i. 1, speak of believers as *elect:* so Rev. xvii. 14. In Rom. xi. 5, Eph. i. 4, 2 Th. ii. 13, Paul says that his readers were *chosen* by God, before the world was, for a salvation to be realised in holiness and faith; and that God's choice arose, not from their works, but altogether from God's favour.

The N.T. doctrine of election may be thus stated: From eternity, moved only by pity for our lost state and not at all by any foreseen good in us, and as irresponsible sovereign of the world, God resolved to save, not all men promiscuously, but only those who should believe the Gospel. This doctrine is a restatement of the fundamental doctrine of salvation through faith, from the point of view of the eternal forethought of God. Whatever God does in time, He purposed from eternity: and, whatever He does, He does unmoved by any good external to Himself. For apart from Him no good exists. God proclaimed that He will save all who believe the good news, and destroy those who reject it. We infer then that from eternity He resolved so to do. He saw man in sin and misery, and resolved to save. He was moved to save, by His love to the entire race: Jno. iii. 16, 17, 1 Tim. ii. 4, Tit. ii. 11. To reconcile the salvation of sinners with divine justice, God gave His Son to die: ch. iii. 25, 26. He chose the Gospel to be the instrument, and faith the condition, of salvation to each individual: chs. i. 16, 17, iii. 22, 28, 30. He exerts on all men influences leading towards repentance, influences without which none can come to Christ: Rom. ii. 4, Jno. vi. 44. God thought fit, in infinite wisdom and universal love, to permit men either to yield to, or resist, these influences; and made the effect of the Gospel contingent on man's surrender to them. From the beginning, He foresaw who would believe and how many would continue in faith. But He was moved to save, not by their foreseen faith and perseverance, but only by His love and by man's misery and helplessness. Our faith is God's work in us and gift to us: and the good works which follow faith are not its necessary result, but are attached to it by the grace of God and wrought in us by the Holy Spirit. Our faith and good works, so far from being the motive, are results, of God's eternal purpose.

This doctrine, thus stated, contains all that Paul says about election. The resolution to save, not all men indiscriminately, but only believers, is a *purpose according to election.* For, by fixing, of His own free-will, and without reference to man's conduct, the condition of salvation, He chose the objects of

salvation. We thus owe His favour to-day entirely to the sovereign election of God.

Closely related to this doctrine of Election, is Paul's teaching about PREDESTINATION, already in some measure expounded under ch. viii. 29, 30. It is the eternal purpose in which before the world was God marked out the path along which, and the goal towards which, He would lead His chosen ones, viz. to adoption into His family and to likeness to the glory of His Firstborn. It is a logical development of Doctrine 3, viz. that we are to be dead to sin and living for God in Christ Jesus, just as Election is a development of Doctrine 1, Justification through Faith, each of these fundamental doctrines being viewed in the light of the eternal forethought of God.

Like election, predestination is simply a purpose; and by no means implies its inevitable accomplishment. Hence in ch. xi. 21, 22 Paul solemnly warns his readers that, unless they continue in faith, they will, although predestined to glory, be cut off and perish.

This chapter has frequently been appealed to in support of Calvin's teaching that God brings to bear, in pursuance of an eternal purpose, upon some of those who hear the Gospel and not on others, influences which necessarily and always lead to repentance, faith, justification, and eternal life; and that the reason why these influences, without which none can be saved, are not exerted on some men while they are on others is entirely in God and not at all in man. See my *New Life in Christ* pp. 270—276. And it must be admitted that some serious objections brought against this teaching of Calvin are in Rom. ix. brought against the teaching of Paul. But very different doctrines may lie open to the same objection. And Paul's replies, which are irresistible against those who object to the doctrine of Justification through Faith, are powerless to meet the same objections when brought against the teaching of Calvin. It is true that, if Calvin's teaching were that of Paul, a Jew might object that it was inconsistent with the promise of God: and, if so, the objection would, I admit, be fairly met in *vv.* 6—13. Again, on the ground of justice, objection has frequently been made to Calvin's teaching. But was anyone who brought this objection ever convinced, by reading *vv.* 14—18, that this teaching is in harmony with God's justice? Certainly the story of Pharaoh does nothing whatever to harmonize it with the character of God. But we have seen how decisively the case of Pharaoh overturns objections to the teaching of Rom. iii. 22, ix. 31

based on the justice of God. To the teaching of Calvin we might fairly bring the objection in *v.* 19. But how irrelevant would then be Paul's answer! We should reply back that it was not our fault that we were born in sin; and that being born in sin we could not, apart from justifying grace, avoid resisting God. Therefore God would have no more reason to find fault with us than with a lion tearing its prey. The mention of the potter's clay puts to silence the man who objects to Rom. iii. 22, ix. 31: but, as a defence of Calvin's scheme, it provokes bitterest reply. We cannot accept doctrines never explicitly asserted in the Bible simply because objections now brought against them were also brought against other teaching of Paul. See further in my *New Life in Christ* pp. 263—277.

SECTION XXXIII

THE UNBELIEF OF THE JEWS IS A RESULT OF IGNORANCE

CH. X. 1—13

Brethren, the good pleasure of my heart and my *petition to God on their behalf* is *for* their *salvation.* [2] *For I bear them witness that they have zeal* for *God, but not according to understanding.* [3] *For, ignorant of the righteousness of God and seeking to set up their own* righteousness, *to the righteousness of God they have not submitted.* [4] *For Christ* is *an end of law for righteousness to everyone that believes.* [5] *For Moses writes that "the man who has done" the righteousness which is from law "shall live in" it.* [6] *But the righteousness which* is *from faith says thus, "Say not in thy heart, Who will go up into heaven?" that is, to bring down Christ:* [7] *or, "Who will go down into the abyss?" that is, to bring up Christ from* the *dead.* [8] *But what says it? "Near thee is the word, in thy mouth and in thy heart:" that is, the word of faith which we proclaim,* [9] *that if thou confess with thy mouth Jesus* as

Lord, and believe in thy heart that God raised Him from the *dead, thou shalt be saved.* [10] *For with* the *heart* men *believe for righteousness, and with* the *mouth confession is made for salvation.* [11] *For the Scripture says, Everyone "that believes on Him shall not be put to shame."* [12] *For there is no difference of Jew and Greek. For the same* is *Lord of all, being rich towards all that call on Him.* [13] *For "everyone whoever may call upon the name of* the *Lord will be saved."*

1. Brethren: to Christians. The Jews are spoken of in the third person: **on their behalf.** Cp. ch. ix. 31—33. **For salvation:** aim of Paul's prayer for Israel. This prayer proves that the case of those for whom (in ch. ix. 3) Paul mourns is not hopeless. So ch. xi. 23.

2. Proof that they need salvation. But before proving this, and thus finding fault, Paul gives them credit for all the good in them. **Zeal** *for God:* literally, **of God:** same phrase in Acts xxii. 3, an interesting coincidence. **Not according to understanding:** earnestness in God's cause not guided by an intelligent view of His revealed purpose. Consequently, while seeking salvation, they are still unsaved. None need our sympathy and prayers more than those who are earnest for God but know not how to serve Him.

3. Explains their want of understanding. **Righteousness of God:** as in chs. i. 17, iii. 21: cp. "righteousness from God" in Ph. iii. 9. So also in *vv.* 5, 6, righteousness *from law* and *from faith.* It is in conspicuous contrast to **their own** righteousness; and is something which the Jews do *not know* and to which they **have not submitted.** They sought the Judge's approval by obedience to law. Had they succeeded, they would have had a righteousness of *their own,* i.e. resulting from their own effort, and derived *from law.* But God accepts as righteous all who believe, and these only. Of this *righteousness,* a gift *of God,* the Jews were **ignorant.** Consequently, *they did not submit* to it, i.e. to God's way of bestowing righteousness, by laying aside their own efforts to make themselves righteous. Consequently, they still need salvation: and therefore Paul prays for them.

4. Proof of their ignorance and need of salvation. **End:** see under ch. vi. 21. It involves here the idea of cessation as in Lk. i. 33. For Paul is exposing the ignorance of those who seek

to set up a righteousness of their own which can come only from *law*. **Christ an** *end* **of law**: the principle, Do this and live, being replaced, for those who believe, by the Gospel, which says, Live and do this. Cp. chs. vi. 14, vii. 4, Gal. ii. 19, iii. 25. **For righteousness**: purpose for which in Christ we have been removed from the domain of law, viz. that righteousness may be given **to everyone that believes.** Cp. ch. i. 5, "for obedience of faith;" *v.* 16, "for salvation to everyone that believes." If Christ by His own appearance has put an *end* to law as a means of salvation or as a hindrance to it, in order that all who believe may obtain righteousness, then to endeavour to set up our own righteousness, which can rest only on the basis of law, is to display ignorance of the righteousness which God gives.

5—11. Proof that *Christ* is *an end of law*. **Moses writes**: nearly word for word from Lev. xviii. 5, and embodying a principle running through the Mosaic Law. If then the Law be historically due to *Moses*, these words may be fairly quoted as his, whether or not the Book of Leviticus as we have it came actually from his pen: see Diss. iii. The Vat. MS. and the Syriac and Old Latin versions read *Moses describes the righteousness etc. . . . that.* The practical difference is slight: and the Revisers' reading is somewhat better attested. **Shall live**: primarily natural life: the reward promised in the Mosaic Law, e.g. Dt. xxx. 20. But, since all life, here and hereafter, is from God, the difference does not weaken Paul's inference. **In it**: in **the righteousness which** is **from law**: cp. Ezek. xviii. 22, 24. Lev. xviii. 5 reads *in them*, viz. in the ordinances. The change is immaterial, and suits Paul's argument. In Lev. xviii. 5, God solemnly announces the great principle that only by obedience to His commands can men obtain the blessings promised in the Law. This is the essential principle of all law.

6, 7. Further proof that Christ is an end of law. **Which** is **from faith**: as in chs. i. 17, iii. 22. **Says thus**: **righteousness** being personified: cp. Prov. viii. 1, 2. In Dt. xxx. 12—14, at the close of his farewell address, Moses asserts a universal principle which applies to righteousness by faith. Therefore in his words *the righteousness from faith* speaks and describes itself. He reminds Israel that God has spoken. There is therefore no need for effort on their part to find out the will of God. Others might inquire whether there is one God, or many gods, and whether God desires the obedience and worship of men. To Israel all such inquiry was shut out by God's

revelation of Himself. They had no need to ask for someone to mount the sky to find out God, or to cross the sea to learn from other nations. God's own word was already in their midst, spoken by human lips, pondered in human hearts. Moses asserts the great principle that a revelation from God makes needless, and therefore ought to put an end to, all human effort for that which He reveals. Such effort implies either ignorance or rejection of God's revelation.

This principle was applied by Moses to the Law just repeated in the ears of the people. But, like all other great principles, it has an application far beyond the thought of the original speaker. It applies with great force to the fuller revelation in Christ. In the Law God gave a knowledge of His will: in the Gospel He gives conformity to His will. Therefore, as the former revelation put aside as needless all effort to obtain knowledge of His will, so the later revelation puts aside all effort to attain righteousness. Such efforts are as much a mark o ignorance and obstinacy as would have been in the days of Moses efforts to obtain by human wisdom a knowledge of God's will. Paul is therefore justified in calling these words of Moses a voice of the righteousness of faith proclaiming the end of law. For law implies doing: and the Gospel, even according to a principle asserted by Moses, puts an end to doing as a means of righteousness. This appeal to Moses is a remarkable example of skilful and correct exegesis.

In thy heart: where unbelief speaks before it dares to speak in the lips. **That is**: Paul's exposition of Moses' words. To seek justification from works, is to act as though **Christ** had not come **down** from **heaven.** This suggests His pre-existence. **Abyss**: literally *without bottom:* same word in Lk. viii. 31, Rev. ix. 1, 2, 11, xi. 7, xvii. 8, xx. 1, 3. Hence it is used for the unfathomable sea; and for the place of the dead. Moses refers to the former, Paul to the latter. Paul modifies the words of Moses to suit the facts of the Gospel. This he has a right to do because his modification leaves the principle untouched. To seek a righteousness of our own is to act as though Christ had never risen.

8. The quotation from Dt. xxx. 12—14 continued, and still further expounded. **In thy mouth**: to be publicly spoken. **In thy heart**: to be silently pondered. **That is**: Paul's exposition, as in *vv.* 6, 7. **Word of faith**: announcement of salvation through faith. **Proclaim**: as in *vv.* 14, 15, ii. 21, 1 Cor. i. 23,

xv. 11, 12, etc.: cognate to the word *herald* in 1 Tim. ii. 7, 2 Tim. i. 11.

9. Contents of *the word of faith*. It is a promise suspended on two conditions. **If thou confess**: cp. Mt. x. 32. By making confession a condition of salvation, God put the Gospel into **the mouth** as well as the heart of those that believe. **In thy heart**: the inner chamber, far removed from human sight, in which men **believe. That God raised Him etc.**: historic object-matter of saving faith. But belief of the historic fact will not save unless it include belief of the great promise stated in this verse: **thou shalt be saved.** It was needless to add this further matter of faith: for all promises are fulfilled only in those who by faith expect their fulfilment. The man who is sure *that God raised* Christ **from** the **dead,** and is sure, because Christ said so, that all who believe this, and therefore himself, *will be saved*, will, according to the plain statement of this verse, be saved. Now our conscience tells us with the authority of God that sin excludes the sinner from heaven. Consequently we cannot believe that we shall be saved unless we are prepared to forsake sin: and our faith becomes a reliance upon the power of Him who is able to save from all sin.

Notice here the importance of the resurrection of Christ: cp. chs. i. 4, iv. 25, vi. 4, 5, vii. 4, viii. 34. Compare also 1 Jno. v. 1. The difference of the object-matter of faith is immaterial. We cannot believe that Christ rose from the dead without admitting His claim to be the Son of God.

10. Further explanation and support of the foregoing statement. The order is changed from *mouth* and *heart* in *v.* 9 as in Dt. xxx. 14 to the order of time, which is **heart** and **mouth.** Since the *heart* (see ch. i. 21) is the seat of the intelligence and the will, and since all belief of the words of God or man is an act of the will accepting the judgment of the intelligence, it is **with the** *heart* that men **believe.** And we believe the Gospel in order to obtain **righteousness,** i.e. to be justified. **For salvation**: final salvation, as in chs. v. 9, 10, xiii. 11. The moment we believe the promise, we receive the gift of *righteousness*. But we cannot retain it to final *salvation* unless we **confess** our faith. And, if we know that God requires confession, we cannot believe His promise of salvation without a purpose to confess. For our conscience will not allow us to believe that God smiles on us while we refuse to obey Him.

11. Proof, from Isa. xxviii. 16, already quoted in Rom. ix. 33, that salvation is by faith. **Everyone**: not in the text quoted, but

justified in *vv.* 12, 13. All who are not saved **will be put "to shame,** to eternal abhorrence:" Dan. xii. 2.

The assertion in *v.* 4 is now proved. Paul's application to the Gospel of Moses' words touching the Law has been justified by the words of Isaiah. For this last taught that in days to come they who believe will be saved; thus implying a new revelation from God to man: and, if so, Moses' words will apply to this new revelation. God's word will put aside all self-effort to obtain salvation, as His word through Moses had already put aside all self-effort to obtain a knowledge of His will. And, if so, according to Moses' own description of the Law as something to be done, the new revelation will put aside the Law; and will do this in order to bestow salvation on those who believe. Hence the prophecy in Isa. xxviii. 16, read in the light of its fulfilment in Christ and of the principle asserted by Moses, affords complete proof of the assertion in *v.* 4. And, if so, the Jews are ignorantly resisting God; and therefore in spite of their zeal are in need of salvation, and are fit objects for (*v.* 1) Paul's prayer.

12. Paul now justifies the word *everyone* inserted by him in the above quotation, by asserting a principle which breaks down all national distinctions. **No difference:** as in ch. iii. 23. **Jew and Greek:** as in chs. i. 16, ii. 9, 10, iii. 9. The recurring phrases in *vv.* 3, 5, 6, 12 indicate that Paul has now returned to his main thesis in chs. i. 16, 17, iii. 21—30. **Lord of all:** probably Christ, to whom the word *Lord* was distinctively applied: cp. ch. xiv. 9, 1 Cor. viii. 6, Ph. ii. 11. **Rich towards all etc.:** so Eph. iii. 8. **Call-upon:** to appeal to for help, or as a witness: cp. 1 Cor. i. 2, 2 Cor. i. 23, 2 Tim. ii. 22, Acts xxv. 11, 12, 21, 25. In the presence of the one Master, all national distinctions fade.

13. Quotation from Joel ii. 32, asserting that **everyone** who appeals to God will be saved, and thus justifying the word *everyone* inserted by Paul in the quotation in *v.* 11. Same quotation in Acts ii. 21. Joel refers evidently to the Day of Christ. He foretells that salvation will be obtained by calling upon God. And, although he speaks of a deliverance in Jerusalem and in Zion, his words forbid a limitation of this salvation to the Jews. The words quoted announce clearly a salvation for all. The **Lord:** in Joel *Jehovah*, the proper name of the God of Israel. But it is easy to apply it to Christ our Lord. The difference is immaterial. Salvation is from the Father through the Son: and we pray through the Son and to the Son.

This section expounds, in the light of principles asserted by

Moses, the words quoted in ch. ix. 33. Hence the quotation is repeated in ch. x. 11, and then further expounded by comparison with another quotation. In ch. ix. 25, Paul began to prove that the Gospel and its results accord with ancient prophecy. Hosea foretold that aliens will become children of God: and Isaiah taught that only a part of Israel will be saved. Before Paul's eye, these prophecies were being fulfilled. The mass of the Jews were unsaved, because of their unbelief, and because the Gospel had become to them a stone of stumbling. Even this was foretold. For it had been clearly announced that God Himself would be a stumbling-block to Israel, and that believers would be saved. The plainness of the prophecy forces upon Paul the thought that Israel's unbelief arises from inexcusable ignorance. His intense conviction of this evokes a prayer for their salvation. He opens a way for his charge of ignorance by acknowledging the earnestness of the Jews; and proves it by showing that what they were earnestly seeking to set up Christ came to put an end to, and that this is clearly taught in the words of Isaiah just quoted, read in the light of the teaching of Moses.

The principle asserted in Dt. xxx. 12—14 is valid for all blessings promised on the condition of faith. For instance, to seek to obtain by our own moral effort full deliverance from the stain and power of sin, is as useless and needless as to seek for someone to fetch Christ from heaven. For God has promised this salvation as a free and present gift to all who believe. Therefore Christ is an end of law for purity as for righteousness. We believe the word of God, and both are ours.

SECTION XXXIV

THE PREACHED GOSPEL AND ISRAEL'S UNBELIEF WERE FORETOLD

CH. X. 14—21

How then are they to call on one *in whom they have not believed? But how are they to believe* one *whom they have not heard?* [15] *But how are they to hear without a herald proclaiming?*

But how are heralds to proclaim unless they be sent? According as it is written, "*How beautiful the feet of those that announce, as glad tidings, good things.*" [16] *But not all have obeyed the glad tidings. For Isaiah says, Lord,* "*who has believed what we have heard?*" [17] *Therefore faith* comes *from something heard; and that which is heard* comes *through the word of Christ.*

[18] *But I say, Have they not heard? Certainly* they have. "*Into all the earth went forth the sound of them, and their words into the ends of the world.* [19] *But I say, Has Israel not known? First, Moses says,* "*I will provoke you to jealousy for* that which is *no nation; for a nation without understanding, I will move you to anger.*" [20] *But Isaiah is very bold, and says,* "*I was found by those not seeking me: I became manifest to those not asking after me.*" [21] *But touching Israel he says,* "*All the day I stretched out my hands towards a people disobedient and contradicting.*"

14, 15*a*. Four questions suggested by the foregoing quotation. None can **call on** God unless **they believe in** Him: cp. Heb. xi. 6. Hence the teaching of Joel ii. 32 implies that of Isa. xxviii. 16. Nor can we **believe** one whose words we have **not heard.** This implies that the faith which saves is produced by spoken words. Again, we cannot hear the words of the Great King unless a *herald* proclaim them. Nor can this be unless such herald be **sent** from God to men. **Herald-proclaiming:** same word as in *v.* 8.

15*b*. Quotation from Isa. lii. 7 in harmony with the teaching underlying the foregoing questions and the quotation from Joel. The prophet foresees the arrival of messengers *announcing-as-glad-tidings good-things*. He thought probably of the return from Babylon. But his words, especially in ch. liii., found no worthy fulfilment then; and therefore point forward to blessings still future. In the Gospel of Christ, we find both the good news and the smitten deliverer. The *news* was so *good* that in the eyes of those who heard it **the** weary and way-worn **feet** which had borne the messengers were **beautiful.** Contrast ch. iii. 15, Acts v. 9. **Announce-as-glad-tidings:** same word in ch. i. 15. Cognate to the word *Gospel* in *v.* 16. The object-matter of this glad announcement is added: **good-things.**

16. Although the *news* was so *good*, **not all** who heard it gave to it the submission it demanded and **obeyed the Gospel:** cp. *v.* 3, ch. i. 5, 2 Th. i. 8. *Not all:* stating much less than the whole truth: so ch. iii. 3. In proof of that which no one can deny, Paul quotes an ancient prophecy, to show that the Jews' unbelief was foretold, and is therefore no proof or presumption that the Gospel they rejected is not divine. The prophet throws himself forward into the days of the good tidings. He and his compeers hear the news. But he sadly asks, **Who has believed what we have heard?** This question, asked in prophetic vision, implies that not many believed; and is therefore a prophecy of the unbelief of the mass of the Jews in Paul's day.

17. A general inference from *vv.* 14—16, including the quotations from Isa. lii. 7, liii. 1. **Faith . . . something heard . . .** a spoken **word:** rising from effect to cause: so *v.* 14. *Word:* an articulate sound, as in *vv.* 8, 18; but different from the word used in ch. ix. 6, 9, 28, which signifies intelligent discourse. Since Paul quotes the Book of Isaiah for the light it sheds on the Gospel, he speaks of the herald's proclamation, without which there can be nothing heard and no faith, as a *word of Christ:* probably a word spoken by Christ. Contrast "the word of faith" in *v.* 8. The genitive case, **of Christ,** leaves the precise relation to be determined by the context.

18. Throughout ch. x., by showing that the Gospel and its rejection were foretold, Paul makes good against the Jews his charge of inexcusable ignorance. He now takes up a possible excuse. Since faith comes only from hearing, those who have **not heard** cannot be blamed for unbelief. Paul therefore asks, Can Israel plead this excuse? He clothes his emphatic denial in the words of Ps. xix. 4. He does not in any sense appeal for proof to the Psalm, nor does he expound, as in *vv.* 6—8, its underlying principle, but simply makes use of the psalmist's words to express his own thoughts. Ps. xix. describes the voice of Nature, especially the heavenly bodies, as proclaiming the glory of their Maker. Paul says, referring to the limited circle in which he moved, that **the sound of them,** i.e. the voice of the heralds of salvation, is co-extensive with the light of the sun: cp. ch. i. 8, Col. i. 6, 23. His use of these words suggests that the universal revelation of God in Nature is a pledge that in every land the glory of God manifested in Christ will some day be proclaimed.

19. Further proof that the Jews are without excuse. **Did Israel not know?** viz. that the sound of the Gospel would go to all lands. The quotations following prove that they ought to have known it. Of several proofs, Paul quotes **first** the words of **Moses,** as recorded in Dt. xxxii. 15—21. He foretold that Israel would worship that which is no god and thus provoke God to jealousy and anger, and that in return God would move them to jealousy and anger by bestowing His favour on that which is no nation: a clear prophecy that God will bestow His favour upon Gentiles, and by so doing displease Israel. **Provoke-to-jealousy:** or *emulation* good or bad: same word in a good sense in ch. xi. 11, 14; cognate to *zeal* in chs. x. 2, xiii. 13. **No nation:** cp. ch. ix. 25, 26. In none except the chosen people was the true idea of a nation realised. **Without-understanding:** same word in ch. i. 21, as a characteristic of the Gentiles.

20, 21. Another proof, from Isa. lxv. 1, 2, that the Gospel will be accepted by Gentiles and rejected by Israel. **Is-very-bold:** spoke at great personal peril. The present tense gives a vivid picture of the fearless prophet. He says in God's name, "I gave audience to men who asked not, I was found by men who sought Me not. I said, Here I am, here I am, to a nation not called by My name. I stretched out My hands all the day to a nation in rebellion, the men who walk in a way not good, after their own reasonings." He was looking forward to a day (ch. lxiv. 11) when the temple and Jerusalem lie desolate; and (*v.* 7) the people are forgetful of God and (ch. lxv. 3, 4) practically heathen, yet (*v.* 5) boasting peculiar holiness. He cries to God, and God answers him. Speaking from the distant future, God declares that He has revealed Himself to this practically heathen nation. Salvation is at hand, salvation most glorious and complete; but only for the chosen seed, for the servants of God. Upon the rest will fall (*vv.* 12—15) sorrow and death. These words had no worthy fulfilment except in the salvation announced by Christ: and they foretell that it will find Israel godless and rebellious. They found remarkable fulfilment in the state of Israel in Paul's day. The emphatic words, **but touching Israel,** seem to imply that *v.* 20 does not refer to Israel but to the Gentiles. The words *no nation* in *v.* 19 refer evidently to Gentiles; and suggest that *v.* 20 has the same reference. But Isa. lxv. 1 and 2 refer apparently to the same persons, viz. Israel. Perhaps Paul, quoting from memory, may have overlooked this identical reference. In any

case, God's longsuffering to Israel when it was practically heathen was a prophecy of mercy for the Gentiles. **All the day**: an unceasing appeal. **Disobedient and contradicting**: refusing by acts and words.

This verse, as applied by Paul to the Jews of his own day, is utterly inconsistent with Calvin's teaching that the grace of God is irresistible. Had God, following a hidden purpose, withheld from these disobedient Jews influences without which they could not come to Him, these solemn words would have been meaningless. So ch. ii. 4.

In ch. x. 1—13, Paul expounded words quoted in ch. ix. 33 from Isa. viii. 14, xxviii. 16, in the light of Lev. xviii. 5, Dt. xxx. 12—14; and supported his exposition by a quotation from Joel. He has now proved that this latter quotation implies salvation through faith, a preached word, and divinely-sent preachers; that Isaiah foretold the announcement of good news and the persistent disobedience of the mass of the nation; and that Moses foretold that God would move Israel to anger by bestowing His favour on others. The Jews had heard the Gospel, and they knew what Moses and Isaiah had said. They were therefore not only ignorant but inexcusably ignorant.

Paul thus completes his proof, begun in ch. ix. 25, that the Gospel and its results accord with O.T. prophecy. Good tidings (Isa. lii. 7) have been announced, viz. a proclamation of (chs. liii. 1, xxviii. 16) salvation through faith, for all (Joel ii. 32) who cry to God. This salvation has been accepted by only a small part of the nation: Isa. x. 22, i. 9. The good news has been disbelieved by many in Israel; and God's continued offers of mercy have been rudely rejected: Isa. liii. 1, lxv. 2. He who was designed to be a foundation has become a stone of stumbling: Isa. viii. 14, xxviii. 16. At the same time, aliens have become not only the people, but the sons, of God: Hos. ii. 23, i. 10.

The argument of chs. ix. 25—x. has less weight for us, who from childhood have received the O.T. and N.T. with the same authority, than for Paul's readers, many of whom had read the O.T. as the word of God long before they heard the Gospel. To such men, the discovery that the Gospel, a thing of yesterday, was in its essence, in many details, and in its reception and results, foretold in the sacred books which for centuries their fathers had revered, must have come with a force we cannot estimate. No wonder that the O.T. was a chief means of leading many Jews to believe the Gospel: cp. Rom. xvi. 26,

2 Tim. iii. 15; and as coincidences, Acts xiii. 27, xvii. 11, 12, xviii. 28, xxvi. 27, xxviii. 23.

But notice carefully that Paul deduces the doctrines of the Gospel, not from the O.T. as we do from the N.T., but from a few fundamental truths, e.g. chs. iii. 21—26, vi. 3, 11, viii. 3, 4, which he asserts and assumes without proof. These rest, as a new and final revelation from God, on the authority of Christ. And the authority of Christ rested in His lifetime (Jno. v. 36, x. 25) on His miracles; and now rests (Rom. i. 4, iv. 24) on the greater miracle of His resurrection. Only after he asserted and expounded these great doctrines, does Paul appeal to the prophets. And he appeals to them not so much in proof of particular doctrines as in proof of the harmony of the Old and New. Hence his favourite form, *According as it is written.* This harmony, amid so great differences, is a wonderful confirmation of the truth of the Gospel and of the divine mission of Him who proclaimed it. The prophets promised beforehand, and thus now bear witness to, the Gospel: chs. i. 2, iii. 22. By doing so, they bear witness to Christ: Acts x. 43.

SECTION XXXV

YET GOD HAS NOT CAST OFF HIS PEOPLE

CH. XI. 1—10

I say then, has God "cast off His people?" Be it not so. For I also am an Israelite, from Abraham's seed, the *tribe of Benjamin.* [2] *God has not cast off His people, whom He fore-knew. Or, know ye not what in Elijah's* case *the Scripture says? how he intercedes to God against Israel,* [3] *Lord "Thy prophets they have killed, Thy altars they have pulled down, and I have been left alone, and they seek my life."* [4] *But what says the response to him? "I have left for Myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed knee to Baal."* [5] *In this way then also in the present season*

there has come to be a remnant according to an election of grace.
[6] *But if by grace*, it is *no longer from works: else grace is no longer grace.*

[7] *What then? That which Israel seeks for, this he has not obtained: but the election obtained it; and the rest were hardened:*
[8] *according as it is written, "God gave them a spirit of stupor, eyes that they may not see, and ears that they may not hear, until this day."* [9] *And David says, "Let their table become a trap and a capture and a snare and a recompense to them.* [10] *Let their eyes be darkened that they may not see, and their back bend Thou down always."*

1. A possible inference from the foregoing, at once repudiated. To suggest it, Paul put last in ch. x. the terrible words from Isa. lxv. 1, 2. It might be thought that because of their disobedience God had resolved to shut out Israel from the salvation. By putting his question in words borrowed from Ps. xciv. 14, Paul suggests the answer.

The Greek aorists in *vv.* 1—4 do not refer to any definite time in the past, as would the English preterite, but cover the whole past time. I have therefore rendered them by the English perfect: **has God cast off etc.? Be it not so**: a denial, of which all ch. xi. is a proof. **For I etc.**: not so much a proof of the denial as a reason for its earnestness. For a single exception proves nothing; and Paul's denial needs complete proof. "Far be it from me, who am myself an Israelite, to say that God has cast off His people." **Abraham's seed**: recalling the promises to Abraham. **Tribe of Benjamin**: giving definiteness to **I am an Israelite.** Paul knew even the name of his tribe: so Ph. iii. 5. Benjamin was one of the two tribes which returned from captivity: Ezra iv. 1, x. 9.

2*a*. Solemn repetition of the denial. **Whom He foreknew**: recalling the same word in ch. viii. 29. It develops the proof already suggested by the words **His people.** To cast off one whom we promised to favour, because of his bad conduct, implies ignorance at the time of the promise, of what his conduct would be. Jehovah promised, without any mention of conduct, to be a God to Abraham's seed for ever: and, when He gave the promise, He foresaw all that Abraham's seed would do. God's perfect foreknowledge makes inconceivable that He will change His purpose or leave His promise unfulfilled.

2*b*—**4.** Confirmation, from an incident in the life of **Elijah,**

of the foregoing denial: see 1 Kgs. xix. 10, 18. **Or, know ye not etc.:** cp. chs. vi. 3, vii. 1. **Intercedes:** his words are a complaint **against Israel. Thy prophets they have killed:** so ch. xviii. 4. **Thy altars etc.:** so *v.* 30. This suggests that Lev. xvii. 8, Dt. xii. 5, 13, 14 had become obsolete. Or these may have been memorial altars, as in Josh. xxii. 10—34. **Left alone:** a solitary surviving servant of God: for the reply of God speaks not of prophets but of faithful men. **The response:** an oracular voice of God, as in 2 Macc. ii. 4; a cognate verb in same sense in Mt. ii. 12: cp. 2 Macc. xi. 17. When God took away, by the sword of Jezebel, most of His servants, He says, **I have left** behind **for Myself,** i.e. to be His witnesses to the nation, **seven thousand** faithful **men.** This suggests that all others in the kingdom of Israel had worshipped **Baal.**

5. In this way then: what happened in Elijah's day has happened again. Although we must add to the seven thousand in Israel a number probably much larger in the kingdom of Judah, it is still certain that, owing to the apostasy of the mass of the nation, the true people of God were reduced to a small remnant. Yet God continued to be the God of Israel, and fulfilled the promises made to Abraham and David. He preserved for Himself a faithful remnant, and in them preserved the sacred race. So in Paul's day the true worshippers were few. That they were more numerous than some thought, is suggested by Paul's quotation of Elijah's complaint. The incident proves that the reduction of the true Israel to a small remnant, and the punishment to be inflicted on the unbelievers, do not imply that *God has cast off His people.* This incident is also a reply to the covert objection that the Gospel cannot be true, because, if true, the ancient people of God would be reduced to a mere handful. For it shows that this happened once, and may therefore happen again. Consequently, the fewness of the Jewish followers of Jesus is no disproof that they only are the heirs of Abraham's promises.

Election: as in ch. ix. 11: to take, not the whole, but a part. See note on p. 279. **Of grace:** a selection made on the ground, not of merit, but of undeserved favour. Such is God's purpose, revealed in Christ, to save all who put faith in Christ. Same word in chs. i. 5, 7, iii. 24, iv. 4, 16, v. 2, 15, 17, 20, 21, vi. 1, 14.

6. Inference from the foregoing words. **Grace . . . works:** recalling ch. iv. 4, 5. These are mutually exclusive. **Else grace etc.:** proof of the foregoing inference. **No longer:** twice:

the continuity of logical necessity: so ch. vii. 17, 20. Unless *grace* and *works* are mutually exclusive, grace loses its essential character and **is no longer grace.** *Is:* literally *becomes*, i.e. continuously manifests itself in its true character.

7. Summary of the argument, introduced by the question **What then?** as in ch. iii. 9. **What Israel seeks for:** viz. righteousness, as in chs. ix. 31, x. 3; cp. Acts xxvi. 7. **Obtained:** had the good *fortune* to get: same word in Heb. vi. 15, xi. 33, Jas. iv. 2. **The election:** the elected ones, abstract for concrete as in ch. ii. 26, 27. **And the rest etc.:** the only alternative for those who did not attain that for which they sought. **Hardened:** same word in same sense in 2 Cor. iii. 14, Mk. vi. 52, viii. 17, Jno. xii. 40; cognate word in Eph. iv. 18, Mk. iii. 5. It denotes a weakening or destruction of capacity for discerning spiritual things. Same idea, but other word, in ch. ix. 18. The sum of all is that Israel has failed to get that for which the nation sought, and by that failure has suffered loss of spiritual susceptibility: but those whom God in undeserved favour selected, i.e. those who believed the Gospel, **have-obtained** it.

8. A quotation combining two passages, in proof that this hardening is in harmony with O.T. teaching. In Isa. xxix. 10, we read, "Jehovah has poured out upon you a spirit of deep sleep, and has bound up your eyes." **Spirit of stupor:** cp. ch. viii. 15, Eph. i. 17: either the Holy Spirit producing as a punishment spiritual insensibility; or an evil spirit as in 2 Cor. iv. 4, Eph. ii. 2. Since God thinks fit to impose such punishment, to inflict it is not unworthy of the Spirit of God. Or, if Satan be the agent, he is such because God uses an enemy to work out His purpose of justice: cp. 2 Sam. xxiv. 1 with 1 Chr. xxi. 1. The words "Jehovah poured out," rendered by Paul **God gave them,** assert that spiritual insensibility fell upon them because God willed it: so ch. ix. 18. The quotation therefore proves that to harden the hearts even of Jews is consistent with God's character and covenant. It also recalls Dt. xxix. 4, where Moses teaches that power to understand spiritual things is God's gift; and that the Israelites had not received it during their long wanderings in the wilderness: another proof that the spiritual blindness of Israel was not new.

9, 10. Another quotation in support of the above: Ps. lxix. 22. **David:** as in ch. iv. 6. **A trap:** to catch birds: same word in 1 Tim. iii. 7, vi. 9, 2 Tim. ii. 26. **Capture:** cognate to the common word for wild beast, e.g. Mk. i. 13, Acts xi. 6. It

suggests the ways in which they are caught while securely feeding. **A snare**: same word in chs. ix. 33, xiv. 13: literally the part of the trap on which the bait is put. **Recompense**: cognate word in chs. xi. 35, xii. 19; cp. Lk. xiv. 12, 14. The Psalmist prays, "May the abundance of the good things of the wicked be like a bait which decoys a bird into a trap, and like the grass which the wild deer securely eats while the huntsman draws his bow; and may they thus receive in their own pleasures a recompense for their sin." **Eyes darkened etc.**: means by which the former prayer is to be answered: cp. ch. i. 21, Eph. iv. 18. **Bend down their back**: by laying on them a heavy burden. They will thus become blind slaves. This prayer has often been answered. The good things of this life have made men blind to their spiritual needs and peril; and have thus become the bait with which they have been caught and destroyed.

The vindictive tone of Ps. lxix., especially *vv.* 22—28, falls far below the teaching of Christ, e.g. Mt. v. 44, 45, and of the entire New Testament. Yet it is quoted by Paul. But we notice that it is quoted only to prove that a man's sins are his destruction and that sin is followed by inward blindness. For this purpose, the proof is decisive. All else probably lay outside his thought. See further in Diss. iii.

This section began with words of hope: it ends in deepest gloom. It is true that amid the general apostasy God has reserved for Himself a small band of men whose faithfulness is made the more conspicuous by the faithlessness around. But among these Paul's opponents, in spite of their possible morality, have no place. And they have been smitten with spiritual blindness.

The teaching of *vv.* 8—10 is the only explanation of the indifference to eternal interests manifested by many around us who constantly hear and reject the Gospel. And, if so, this spiritual indifference has an awful significance. It is a mark of God's anger and a foretaste of more terrible punishment. It is the shadow of eternal death. Moreover, what God has inflicted, only God can remove. Hence our own efforts to arouse ourselves will be in vain. The eyes which God has closed, He only can open.

SECTION XXXVI

ISRAEL'S FALL HAS BROUGHT SALVATION TO THE GENTILES, AND IS NOT FINAL

CH. XI. 11—24

I say then, Did they stumble in order that they might fall? Be it not so: but that by their trespass the salvation may come *to the Gentiles, to provoke them to jealousy.* [12] *But if their trespass be* the *world's wealth, and their damage* the *Gentiles' wealth, how much more their fulness?* [13] *But to you I speak, the Gentiles. Inasmuch as then I am an apostle of Gentiles, I glorify my ministry,* [14] *if in any way I may move to jealousy my own flesh, and save some of them.* [15] *For if the casting away of them* be the *world's reconciliation, what* will be *the receiving of them except life from* the *dead?*

[16] *Moreover, if the firstfruit* be *holy,* so *also the lump: and if the root* be *holy,* so *also the twigs.* [17] *But if some of the twigs were broken off, and thou, being a wild olive, wert ingrafted among them, and becamest a sharer of the root of the fatness of the olive tree,* [18] *exult not over the twigs. But if thou dost exult, not thou bearest the root, but the root thee.* [19] *Thou wilt say then, Twigs were broken off, in order that I might be ingrafted.* [20] *Very well: by want of faith they were broken off; and thou standest by faith. Think not high things, but fear.* [21] *For, if God spared not those that were by nature twigs, neither will He spare thee.* [22] *See then God's kindness and severity. On them that fell,* there is *severity; but on thee* is *God's kindness, if thou continue in His kindness; otherwise also thou shalt be cut off.* [23] *Moreover, also they, if they do not continue in* their *want of faith, shall be ingrafted: for God is able again to ingraft them.* [24] *For, if thou wert cut out from that which is by nature a wild olive tree, and against nature wert ingrafted into a good olive tree, how much more will these which are by nature* twigs *be ingrafted to their own olive tree?*

11. A question suggested by *vv.* 8—10. **Stumble**: when they rejected Christ, they struck their foot against the rock on which they might have stood securely. **Fall**: as in 1 Cor. x. 12: the moral sinking which followed their rejection of Christ. It was not necessarily final: see *vv.* 22, 23. The purpose here is evidently that of God, not of the Jews. He presented Christ in a form which led many of the Jews, as God foresaw, to reject Him; and He resolved that rejection of Christ should be followed (*vv.* 8—10) by moral degradation. He thus put a stumbling-block before the Jews: ch. ix. 33. In this sense, the stumbling of the Jews was God's doing. Paul asks, Was it in order to produce this moral degradation that God presented Christ in a form which He foresaw would be a stumbling-block to the Jews. This, he denies; and supports his denial by stating God's real purpose. **Trespass**: as in ch. iv. 25: the moral fall of *vv.* 11, 22. This fall was not the end God had in view, but was a means to a further end, viz. that **salvation** might come **to the Gentiles**, and thus eventually to Israel. Had the Gospel been accepted by the Jews as a nation, the result would have been, to all appearance, fatal to Christianity. For not only would it, as the religion of one hated nation, have been less acceptable to the Gentiles, but it would, in all probability, have sunk into a form of Judaism. The nature and greatness of this danger are seen in Gal. ii. 5, iv. 11, v. 1—4. Had the nation as a whole accepted the Gospel, this element would have become irresistible, and would have strangled Christianity in its cradle. Its rejection by the Jews averted this peril, and in this sense helped forward the triumph of the Gospel. We therefore infer that all this was by the design of God, that in order to guard against this peril and to give to the world a Gospel fitted to the needs of all men He presented salvation to the Jews in a form which He knew they would reject. His foreknowledge enabled Him to do this without infringing human freedom: and Paul has already, in ch. ix. 17, shown it to be no infringement of divine justice.

To provoke etc.: further purpose of this salvation for the Gentiles brought about by the fall of Israel, viz. the ultimate salvation of Israel. *Provoke*-**to-jealousy**, or *emulation*: same word as in ch. x. 19, used now in a good sense. We have here a principle of God's government which flows from His inmost nature, and is therefore universal. Except in the case of final punishment, (see ch. ii. 12,) the penalty is designed for the sufferer's good, viz. to show him the evil of sin and thus lead him to repentance; and is so inflicted as best to attain this end: and in all cases

punishment of individuals is designed for the general good. But it is none the less punishment. For, although the Jews' rejection of Christ was used by God to avert a peril, it would have been much better for them had they at once accepted Him. God would then have averted the peril by other means.

12. Further argument based on *v.* 11. **Damage**: same word in 1 Cor. vi. 7; cognate word in 2 Cor. xii. 13, 2 Pet. ii. 19: literally *worsening*, i.e. the spiritual weakening and injury which followed their moral fall, exact opposite of the **wealth** received by the believing **Gentiles.** Notice a double climax: **trespass** . . . *damage*, **world** . . . *Gentiles:* this last a term of contempt. The fall of the Jews brought damage to them, but enrichment to many whom they despised. **Fulness**: that with which something is made full, or is brought to completeness: same word in *v.* 25, xv. 29, xiii. 10, Mt. ix. 16, Mk. ii. 21, viii. 20, Jno. i. 16, 1 Cor. x. 26, Gal. iv. 4, Eph. iii. 19, iv. 13. **Their** *fulness:* the spiritual enrichment awaiting Israel. **How much more etc.**: if Israel stands in so close relation to the world's salvation that, in order to enrich mankind, it must needs stumble and thus suffer spiritual weakening and loss, how great is the wealth which will come to the world when Israel is made full!

13—15. Development of the new thought just suggested. Paul turns suddenly to the Gentiles and says that for their great good he seeks to save his own nation. **Apostle of Gentiles**: cp. ch. xv. 16, Gal. ii. 7—9, Eph. iii. 8, Acts xxii. 21. **Ministry**, or *office:* see under ch. xii. 7. **Glorify**: as in ch. i. 21. He so fills his office that others may see the greatness of the work committed to him. And in so doing he is seeking to rouse the Jews to **emulation** (as in *v.* 11) and thus to **save some of them.** These last words suggest difficulty, as does the word **in-any-way. My flesh**: noting closest relationship: cp. Gen. xxxvii. 27, Jud. ix. 2, 2 Sam. v. 1. It reveals Paul's true patriotism. By a universal usage of language, the agents of salvation as said to *save:* so 1 Cor. vii. 16, ix. 22, 1 Tim. iv. 16, Jas. v. 20. Only by speaking thus can we realise the grandeur of the work of those who turn a sinner from the error of his ways.

15. A reason why as *apostle of Gentiles* Paul seeks to save his countrymen, viz. the great blessings which will thus come to the Gentiles. **The casting away of them**: not as a people but as individual unbelievers, so long as they continue in unbelief: cp. *vv.* 2, 23. God has shut them out of His family, but is using means to bring them in. **Reconciliation of the world**:

cp. ch. v. 10, 2 Cor. v. 19. It will be explained by the future triumphs of the Gospel. **Reception**: into the favour of God: parallel to *their fulness* in *v.* 12. **Life from the dead**: something as much better than *reconciliation of* the *world* as Israel's *reception* is better than *their rejection*. It can therefore be nothing less than the glorious *life* which will follow the resurrection of the *dead*. Paul thus puts in stronger and more complete form the argument of *v.* 12, to show how deep an interest the Gentiles have in the salvation of the Jews. If Israel's relation to the Kingdom of God be such that their rejection was a means of bringing back to God a revolted world, what less can we expect from Israel's return than the bringing in of the everlasting glory?

Notice here another universal principle. So closely interwoven are the spiritual interests of nations that the salvation of one brings life to others. While we seek to save strangers, we thereby do something to save our own friends.

16—24. Proof that salvation awaits Israel, already implied in *vv.* 12, 15. This is the chief matter of ch. xi.

16. Firstfruit: as in ch. viii. 23: the portion of dough reserved and made into a cake for the priests, as prescribed in Num. xv. 17—21, where twice the LXX. reads *firstfruit* of a *lump*. By requiring this, the Law taught that **the** whole **lump** belongs to God, and is therefore **holy**: and by presenting the *firstfruit* the Jews acknowledged this claim. Just so, by taking the fathers of the Jews to be specially His own, God claimed the entire nation to be *holy*, i.e. devoted to His service: so Ex. xix. 5, 6, Lev. xx. 26. In this indelible objective holiness (see note on p. 39) Paul saw a pledge of the nation's ultimate salvation. **And if the root etc.**: same argument in another form, a form of which Paul makes further use. *Root*: parallel to *firstfruit*, viz. the fathers. Whoever claims the root claims all that afterwards grows from it. **Twigs**: the green shoots of this year's growth; a beautiful emblem of the present generation of men: same word in Mt. xxiv. 32, xiii. 32, xxi. 8; another word in Jno. xv. 2—6. This last metaphor is further developed in *vv.* 17—24 as a warning to the Gentiles, and a ground of hope for Israel.

17, 18. Some: as in ch. iii. 3. **Broken-off**: as fresh twigs are broken by hand. **And thou**: personal appeal, as in chs. ii. 3, ix. 20. **Wild-olive**: a natural growth, without grafting, fit emblem of the Gentiles whom (Acts xiv. 16) God allowed for ages to grow wild. **Among them**: among the twigs, of which some had been broken off. **Fatness**: same word in same sense in Jud. ix. 9, LXX.

The wild twigs were **ingrafted,** and thus drew from **the root** a share **of the** *fatness* **of the** cultivated **olive-tree. Do not exult:** cp. ch. iii. 27. **Over the twigs:** the Jews, of whom many had been broken off. Verse 18 is a reason why they should not exult. The root owes nothing to the twigs, the twigs everything to the root. All the best spiritual life of the world was developed in Israel: cp. ch. xv. 27. To exult over Israel, is to exult over the nation to which they owed all their real good.

19. A boast prompted by the overthrow of the preceding boast. The Gentile might say, So important in God's sight was my salvation that to save me God caused the mass of the Jews to stumble.

20. Very-well: Paul admits the truth of this reply. He has himself said that God deliberately purposed that through the moral fall of Israel salvation should come to the Gentiles: and, if so, the twigs were broken off in order that the wild olive twigs might be grafted in. **By want-of-faith:** so ch. ix. 32; same word in chs. iii. 3, iv. 20, Mk. ix. 24. **Thou:** sudden and personal appeal to the Gentiles. **Standest:** chs. v. 2, xiv. 4, 1 Cor. x. 12: continuance in God's favour. **By faith:** almost equal to *by thy faith.* **Think high-things:** as when one boasts (*v.* 17) at the inferiority of another: same phrase in ch. xii. 16. **But fear:** lest thou be broken off as they were. This is not an emotional fear which makes us unhappy, but a practical fear which keeps us in our ark of safety.

21, 22. Reason for this fear. **By nature:** literally *according to nature:* cp. ch. ii. 14. The Jews (Mt. viii. 12) were "the sons of the kingdom," and (Acts iii. 25) of "the prophets and the Covenant"; i.e. natural descendants of those to whom the promises were made. **If God did not spare** the born children of Abraham when they disbelieved the Gospel, **He will not spare** Gentiles who do the same. Thus the fact boastfully asserted by Gentiles in *v.* 19, admitted by Paul in *v.* 20, becomes to them a solemn warning. **See then etc.:** inference from God's treatment of Jews and Gentiles. **Kindness:** as in ch. ii. 4. **Severity:** literally *cutting-off:* cognate word in 2 Cor. xiii. 10, Tit. i. 13. **Fell:** like the broken twigs on the ground in contrast to the ingrafted wild olive shoots which stand erect on the tree. Same word in same sense in *v.* 11. **If thou continue:** noting that God's continued **kindness** is conditional. Cp. Jno. xv. 6. The condition has been already stated in *v.* 20, and need not be repeated here. **Else also thou etc.:** emphatic

statement of the alternative. The emphasis is increased by **neither** in *v.* 21 and **also** in *v.* 22, which place side by side the believing Gentiles and the fallen Jews.

All exultation of Gentiles over Jews is now shut out. Not only has the spiritual life of the Gentiles come through the Jews, but the present state of the Jews tells what will become of the Gentiles if they cease to believe.

23. Hope for the fallen Jews, whom Paul now places beside the believing Gentiles: **also they. If they do not etc.:** implying that it depends upon themselves whether or not they **continue in** their **unbelief. Will-be-ingrafted:** union with their own olive tree being now possible only in the way in which the Gentiles were united to it. This reveals the completeness of the separation. **Is able:** cp. ch. xiv. 4. Salvation is by the power of **God,** and is therefore possible even for the worst. **Again:** suggesting the argument in *v.* 24. Their salvation will be a return to the God of their fathers.

24. Ground of the hope implied in *v.* 23; which is the chief matter of ch. xi. Just as the case of the Jews reveals the *severity of God*, and is therefore a warning to the Gentiles, so the case of the Gentiles is a mark of His *kindness* and a ground of hope for the Jews. **Against Nature:** same words in ch. i. 26. All grafting is artificial, and is therefore an interruption of the ordinary course of Nature. Paul does not say that to graft a wild scion into a cultivated olive stem is specially *against Nature.* It has been suggested that he refers to the result of the grafting as being against Nature; on the ground that in actual grafting the nature of the scion, not that of the root, determines what the branch will be. But Paul speaks here not of the result but of the act of grafting. We need not try to reconcile this spiritual grafting with that of the olive-yard. There is no argument in the comparison. It is used merely to help us to grasp the relation of Jews and Gentiles to the Kingdom of God. If those who by birth were aliens were brought by faith into His family, we cannot doubt that they who belong by birth to the chosen nation will also be received if they believe.

Notice here another universal principle. God's treatment of one man is a ground of hope or fear to others: for He treats all on the same principles.

Paul has now led us out from the darkness which shrouded *vv.* 7—10 into the light of hope. We have seen that the spiritual blindness inflicted on the Jews was designed to lead

to salvation of both Gentiles and Jews; that these two divisions of our race are so closely bound together that while Paul pursues the salvation of the one he is also seeking to save the other; that the Jews as children of the Patriarchs are God's by a tie which the unbelief of individuals cannot sunder; that those who have been torn from the parent stem were torn off through unbelief, and will remain separated only so long as their unbelief continues; and that God's reception of Gentiles proves His readiness to welcome again the children of Abraham. And from the fall of the unbelieving Jews we have learnt that the ultimate salvation of the believing Gentiles depends on their continuance in faith.

This parable of the olive tree sets before us the Kingdom of God under the two covenants as essentially one. The old tree entered upon a new stage of growth, to which the earlier stages were preparatory. In the Gospel, God gave new and better promises, and in some sense annulled the foregoing reign of law. He also shut out of the Kingdom the Jews who disbelieved them, and brought in the Gentiles who accepted them. Consequently, the outward appearance of the Kingdom of God on earth was changed: and a new and different (Heb. viii. 6, 9) covenant was made. But these changes were but developments of the one Kingdom of God.

FINAL PERSEVERANCE. Verses 20—22 involve clearly an emphatic contradiction of the teaching, by Calvin and others, that all who have been justified will ultimately be saved. For Paul assumes throughout that his readers are already justified, are adopted as sons and heirs of God, and possess the Spirit of God as a firstfruit of their inheritance: see chs. v. 9—11, vi. 18, 22, viii. 2, 15, 16, 23. Yet he solemnly and emphatically warns them that unless they continue in the kindness of God they will be *cut off*. This last can be no less than the punishment already inflicted on the unbelieving Jews who have been *broken off*, and who are held up in *vv.* 20, 21 as a warning to the believing Gentiles. For Paul's deep sorrow for the unbelieving Jews proves clearly that in his view they are on the way to the destruction (ch. ii. 12) awaiting unrepentant sinners. His warning to Gentiles who now stand by faith implies clearly that unless they continue in faith they will experience a similar fate.

It cannot be replied that Paul writes, not about individuals, but about communities in their relation to the Church. For as yet he

has not mentioned the Church, but has dealt only with individuals in their relation to Christ and to God. On the other hand, the words *some of them*, *some of the twigs*, *they that fell*, in *vv.* 14, 17, 22, point to individuals. It is inconceivable that Paul would support this urgent and personal appeal by warning the Roman Christians that, if they do not continue in faith, although they themselves will be brought back and finally saved, the Roman Church will perish.

It has been suggested that Paul speaks of something possible in the abstract but which will never actually take place. But could a mere abstract possibility call forth the earnest tones of *vv.* 20—22? The warning would have no force to men who believed that God had irrevocably resolved to save them. Paul bids his readers to *fear*. But an intelligent man cannot fear that which he knows will not happen. That certain lines of conduct lead to a certain goal will not move us if we are sure that the goal cannot be reached. We may be moved by consequences which lie on the way to the goal, but only by such as lie within range of possibility. There are many serious considerations which, even if Calvin's doctrine were true, would prompt us to cling to faith. But to seek to deter his readers from unbelief by speaking of what both he and they knew could never come, would be unworthy of an apostle.

Nor can Paul refer to a personal and possible, but only temporary, separation from Christ. Such separation would, I admit, be very hurtful, though not fatal; and would be worthy of Paul's warning, and of his readers' *fear*. But the infinite contrast between this temporary fall, which on this supposition is all that could happen to the Gentiles, and that which happened to the Jews would destroy the parallel upon which the warning rests, and would increase rather than lessen the high-mindedness of the Gentiles.

We now ask, Has Paul or any other N.T. writer said anything elsewhere which compels us to set aside what all would admit to be the plain meaning of his words if they stood alone?

If such contrary teaching is to be found in this epistle, we must look for it in ch. viii. and especially in the shout of triumph in *vv.* 31—39. We are here told that no creature can separate us from the love of Christ and of God. But in the two lists (*vv.* 35 and 38, 39) of powerless adversaries neither sin nor unbelief are mentioned: and we remember that these are not creatures. God has placed us in an impregnable fortress: but we are never taught that we cannot leave it. Certainly there is nothing in ch. viii. to contradict the plain teaching of ch. xi. 20—22. Nor do I know of anything in other epistles of Paul.

On the other hand, there is nothing in ch. xi. to modify the joyful assurance of ch. viii. The joy of human friendship, when friendship rests on mutual and merited esteem, is not lessened by a knowledge that friendship sometimes cools. Still less is the joy of Christian hope lessened by our knowledge that, if we cease to believe the promises, they will not be fulfilled to us. God has given a firm foundation for our faith: and on this foundation we rest. So long as we rest there, we are kept in safety by the power of God.

Appeal has often been made to Jno. x. 28, 29: "They will never perish; and no one will snatch them out of My hand." This assurance Christ supports by an appeal to the power of God: "no one can snatch out of the Father's hand." But he does not say that all who are now His sheep will always remain such: and, if they cease to be His, the promise no longer refers to them. For an assertion about a class applies to an individual only so long as he belongs to the class. Unless we have independent proof that he will never cease to belong to the class, we cannot say that what will always be true of the class will always be true of him. For example, we cannot say, relying on Rev. xxi. 8, that, because a man is now a liar, he will inevitably have his part in the lake of fire. If he cease to be a liar, he will pass from under this terrible threat against liars. The above verses do not touch the question whether or not those who are to-day Christ's sheep will always remain such. They therefore do not invalidate the plain inference we have drawn from Rom. xi. 20—22. But they say most solemnly that those who remain in the flock will never perish.

A close parallel to these verses is found in Jno. xv. 1—6. The *branches* are no mere professors. For such are never said to be in Christ: "every branch in Me not bearing fruit, He takes it away." Moreover, their salvation depends on continuance in Christ: "if anyone abide not in Me, he has been cast forth." Mere professors will perish whether they retain their profession or not. In *v.* 6, the separation from Christ is expressly said to be final: "they gather them and cast them into the fire and they are burning."

The teaching of this note is confirmed by ch. xiv. 15, 1 Cor. ix. 24—x. 12; and by Heb. ii. 3, iv. 1, 11, vi. 4—6, x. 26, 29, and indeed by the argument of the entire epistle.

We therefore accept the words before us in their simple and full meaning. Although salvation, from the earliest good desire to final victory, is entirely a work of God, a gift of His undeserved favour, and a realisation of His eternal purpose, it is nevertheless, both in

its commencement and in its continuance, altogether conditional on man's faith. So long as we believe, we are kept by the strong hand of God. But God has thought fit to permit us to resist the influences drawing us to Himself, to permit the fall even of His servants who yield to temptation and the final destruction of those who, after such fall, refuse to repent. This is frequently and plainly taught and implied in Holy Scripture. Against this teaching we cannot argue on the ground of the character of God. For His ways are past finding out: "He has mercy on whom He will, and whom He will He hardens." And against it we cannot set any other equally plain and abundant teaching of Holy Scripture.

SECTION XXXVII

ISRAEL WILL BE SAVED. PRAISE TO GOD

CH. XI. 25—36

For I do not wish you to be ignorant, brethren, of this mystery, that ye be not prudent in your own sight, that hardening in part has happened to Israel, until when the fulness of the Gentiles have come in. [26] *And in this way all Israel will be saved; according as it is written,* "There *will come out of Zion the deliverer; He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob.* [27] *And this* is *the covenant from Me to them, when I have taken away their sins.*" [28] *According to the Gospel,* they are *enemies, because of you: but according to the election,* they are *beloved, because of the fathers.* [29] *For without regret* are *the gifts of grace and the calling of God.* [30] *For just as ye were once disobedient to God, but now have obtained mercy by the disobedience of these,* [31] *in this way also these have now disobeyed, in order that by the mercy* shown *to you also they may obtain mercy.* [32] *For God has shut up all into disobedience, in order that upon all He may have mercy.*

[33] *O depth of riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable His judgments, and untraceable His ways!* [34] *For "who has known* the *mind of* the *Lord? Or who has become His counsellor?"* [35] *Or "who has first given to Him, and it shall be given back to him?"* [36] *Because from Him and through Him and for Him* are *all things. To Him* be *the glory, for ever. Amen.*

25. Further proof, based on a divine revelation and on an ancient prophecy, that salvation awaits **Israel. I do not wish etc.**: as in ch. i. 13. **Mystery**: a secret known only by divine revelation. Same important word in ch. xvi. 25, 1 Cor. ii. 7, Eph. iii. 3, 4, Mt. xiii. 11: see note under 1 Cor. iii. 4. **Prudent in your own sight**: so ch. xii. 16. It keeps up the warning. **Hardening**: recalling *v.* 8. **In part**: only a part, though a large part, of the nation had rejected Christ: cp. *vv.* 5, 7, 17. **Until when etc.**: emphatic part of the sentence. All knew that the Jews were hardened: the great secret was that this was only for a time. **Fulness**: as in *v.* 12: the spiritual wealth with which God will make **the Gentiles** full. **Have-come-in**: into actual existence. Israel's *hardening* will continue till the spiritual wealth designed for the Gentiles has been brought out of the treasury of the divine purpose and poured into their lap. I have no other example of this use of the word *come-in*: but the similar use of the word *come* in Gal. iii. 23, 25, iv. 4 and the frequency of the word *fulness* in the sense here adopted justify, in default of a better, the above exposition. Paul here asserts, as a divine revelation, what in *vv.* 11—16 he inferred, viz. that salvation awaits Israel.

26, 27. Further description of Israel's future. **In this way**: after the enrichment of the Gentiles. **All Israel**: same words (LXX.) in 1 Kgs. xii. 1, 1 Sam. xii. 1: cp. Mt. ii. 3, iii. 5. The contrast with *in part* in *v.* 25 suggests that Paul refers to all Israelites then living, with exceptions so few as to be of no account. **Will be saved**: in what sense? This question can be answered only by the fulfilment. In *v.* 14, x. 1, 9, 10, the same word denotes a personal salvation which begins in justification and ends in glory.

Paul now quotes, as in agreement with *vv.* 25, 26*a*, Isa. lix. 20: "There shall come for Zion a deliverer, and for those who turn away from iniquity in Jacob, says Jehovah. As for Me, this is My covenant with them, Jehovah has said, My Spirit which is upon

thee and My words which I have put in thy mouth shall not depart from thy mouth, and from the mouth of thy seed, and from the mouth of thy seed's seed, Jehovah has said, from this time and for ever." After a time of general apostasy, the prophet sees a deliverer coming for Zion. He sees Israel turning from sin. For those who do so, the deliverer comes, and with them God makes a covenant. The next chapter describes the glory of the salvation which the deliverer will bring. The prophet evidently refers to the last days, and foretells that at the end of the world there will be a turning to God in Israel and a salvation wrought by a coming deliverer. Paul quotes, almost word for word, the LXX.; which differs, though not essentially, from the original; but he varies from both original and LXX. in writing, instead of "for Zion," **out of Zion,** words suggested perhaps by Pss. xiv. 7, liii. 6, cx. 2. **The deliverer:** a definite Saviour, for whom Israel was waiting. When Paul wrote, He had already come *out of Zion.* **Turn away ungodliness:** from the LXX., which here varies from the Hebrew original, but correctly describes the salvation brought by Christ. The Greek plural denotes various kinds of *ungodliness.* **And this** is **the covenant from Me to them:** word for word (LXX.) from Isa. lix. 21. With the rescued ones, God will make a covenant. At this point Paul leaves ch. lix. 21, and finishes the sentence by quoting, almost word for word, ch. xxvii. 9. He thus calls attention to another prophecy of salvation awaiting Israel. A similar mingling of quotations in *v.* 8. It is natural to one who assumes that his readers, like himself, are thoroughly familiar with the book quoted. **Taken-away:** cp. Jno. i. 29. It includes removal of the punishment, power, and stain, of sin.

In what sense Paul expected that *all Israel will be saved,* his writings do not enable us accurately to determine. But evidently his expectation moved him to strive hopefully for the salvation of all Jews within his reach: so *vv.* 14, 24; cp. Acts xiii. 47. This is the practical use of all the unfulfilled prophecies of Holy Scripture, viz. as an encouragement for hope and effort along the lines of the revealed purposes of God.

28. A comment on the position of the unbelieving Jews, prompted by the foregoing prophecies. **Enemies:** objects of God's anger and hostility, in contrast to **beloved,** i.e. objects of His love: so ch. v. 10; see under ch. v. 1. **According to the Gospel:** measured by the word "he that believes shall be saved," they are under the anger of God. **Because of you:** explained in *vv.* 11, 12, 15, 30. In order that salvation might come to the

Gentiles, God sent the Gospel to the Jews in a form which He knew would increase the guilt of most of them. **Election**: as in *v.* 7. **According to the** *election:* when Paul looks at the believing Jews, he sees in them a proof (cp. *v.* 1) that God has not forgotten His ancient covenant, but that for the sake of the fathers He still cherishes purposes of mercy for their children: cp. Ex. ii. 24, Dt. iv. 37, vii. 8. How different the case would have been had all the Jews rejected Christ! Then it would have seemed that the whole nation had been rejected by God. Notice that the same men are *enemies* and *beloved.* God is angry with all who disobey Him, and will be, if their disobedience continue, their eternal foe: but His love to them prompted Him to give Christ to die, and now prompts Him to use means to draw them to repentance.

29. A great truth supporting the foregoing words. **Without-regret**: same word in 2 Cor. vii. 10; cognate word in *v.* 8, Heb. vii. 21, Mt. xxi. 29, 32, xxvii. 3. It differs from *repentance* in Rom. ii. 4, Acts xx. 21, etc., by denoting mere regret without change of purpose. **Gifts-of-grace**: as in ch. i. 11. **Calling**: as in ch. viii. 28. In Mesopotamia and at Sinai, God called Abraham and Israel to be specially His own, and gave them precious promises. These promises He cannot revoke: for He is unchangeable. He cannot change: because He knows all things from the beginning. Similar argument in *v.* 2.

This verse does not contradict Gen. vi. 6, Jer. xviii. 10. For, though God cannot change, many of His gifts are conditional on man's conduct. Therefore change in man is followed by a corresponding change in God's treatment of him. This change in God's action is practically the same to us as though God changed His purpose, and therefore is so described. But in reality God's varying treatment of men is a result of an eternal purpose of Him who knows beforehand what every man will do. The apparent contradiction is due to imperfection of human thought and language. God's character is pledged to fulfil His promises: but each man's share in the fulfilment depends on himself. Hence the prophets announce an almost universal apostasy; and, in spite of it, paint in glowing colours the coming glory.

30, 31. A compact summary of the teaching of ch. xi., thus illustrating the above principle. The Gentiles **once disobeyed** the law of **God** written in their hearts: but they had obtained **mercy**; and this had been brought about, as explained in *vv.* 11, 12, 15, 28, **by the disobedience** of the Jews. **In this way also**: making prominent the similarity of God's conduct in the two cases. **Now**

disobeyed: by rejecting Christ. **In order that by the mercy etc.**: the salvation of the Gentiles being designed, as taught in *v.* 14, to lead to that of Israel.

32. The facts and purposes stated in *vv.* 30, 31 are now attributed to **God.** **Shut-up**: He made temporary disobedience inevitable by closing every door by which man might escape from it. Same word in Gal. iii. 22, 23 and (LXX.) Ps. xxxi. 8. To men born under the curse of Adam's sin, God gave a holy law: the only possible result, and therefore the designed result, was **disobedience.** So ch. v. 20, a close parallel: cp. ch. i. 24, "God gave them up." **All**: Jews and Gentiles. **In order that upon all He may have mercy**: a statement wider and more definite than that in *v.* 31. The *mercy* is traced to *God* and is designed for *all.* A similar purpose in ch. v. 21, Gal. iii. 22, 23. Paul closes his exposition of the Gospel in its relation to Israel by leading us up to a great purpose of mercy embracing all mankind.

In ch. v. 18, at the close of DIV. II., Paul asserted the universality of God's purpose of salvation. So here at the end of DIV. IV. we have a reassertion of the same, with express reference to the great division of mankind into Jews and Gentiles which Paul has been discussing. We have not the words *all men;* because Paul speaks here, not of men as such, but of the two theological divisions of the race. But the first *all* certainly includes the unbelieving Jews of Paul's day, whose *disobedience* to the Gospel has led to salvation of the Gentiles to whom Paul writes: and, if so, they must be included in the second *all* as objects of God's purpose of mercy. And if that purpose includes all Jews, it includes all men. That elsewhere, e.g. Ph. iii. 19, Paul asserts or implies that not all men will ultimately be saved, is no reason for setting aside the plain meaning of plain words asserting that all are objects of God's purpose of mercy.

33. An exclamation of wonder prompted by the unexpected means by which God is accomplishing His purpose. **Depth**: as in ch. viii. 39. **Riches**: as in chs. ii. 4, ix. 23; cp. x. 12. It suggests the resources at God's disposal. **Wisdom**: such profound acquaintance with things as enables us to choose the best ends and means: see note under 1 Cor. ii. 5. **Knowledge**: a lower word. **Judgments**: decisions and utterances of a judge, as in ch. ii. 2. It refers here to God's hardening of unbelievers and His shutting up of all mankind into disobedience. **Unsearchable**: beyond human ability to *find* out the meaning and purpose of **His ways**: the path along which He reaches the end in view.

Untraceable: same word in Eph. iii. 8: footsteps which cannot be traced. The path He chose, which no man could trace but which led to the goal, revealed a wonderful knowledge of past, present, and future: and the sentences pronounced on the children of Abraham and of Adam had purposes disclosing a wisdom which none can fathom.

34, 35. Questions justifying Paul's exclamation. Verse 34 is nearly word for word (LXX.) from Isa. xl. 13. God's thoughts have never been grasped by man: and His wisdom needs no human counsellor. Verse 35 is from Job xli. 11. No one can say that God's gifts are a return for earlier gifts received. This question shuts out all human merit, and reminds us that the actions rewarded are God's gift to us. They therefore make us debtors to God, not God to us.

36. A universal statement involving an answer to the foregoing question. **From Him:** as their ultimate source: so 1 Cor. viii. 6. **Through Him:** as the channel through which possibility passes into actuality. He needs no helper, but Himself works out His own purposes. **For Him:** to accomplish His pleasure. God is the beginning, means, and end of **all things.** These last words cannot include sin. But in a real sense they may include suffering. For God has so constituted the universe that sin brings suffering to the sinner and to others. This need for limitation warns us to interpret with utmost caution the universal statements of the Bible. Each must be limited, as in all human speech, by the writer's mental horizon. **To Him the glory:** may He be viewed by men with the admiration which His work and nature demand, i.e. may He be recognised as the Source, Agent, and End of all good. **For ever. Amen:** *to the* successive *ages* of the future: so chs. i. 25, xvi. 27.

Well may Paul utter this shout of wonder and praise. He sees the spiritual blindness of his people; and knows that it has been inflicted by God in punishment of inexcusable ignorance and rebellion. It is therefore a mark of God's anger against Israel. But as Paul contemplates the punishment, he finds in it a purpose of mercy. The blindness of Israel has led, by the grace and purpose of God, to enlightenment of the Gentiles: and God designs the light which has fallen upon the Gentiles to be reflected back upon Israel. Thus beneath God's frown Paul finds unchanging love to the children of Abraham. While pronouncing sentence on the guilty, He is pursuing a purpose of universal mercy. This discovery of mercy where he expected wrath, the unlikeliness and yet the suitability of the means, fill him with

wonder at the resources of God, at the wisdom with which He uses them, and at the knowledge underlying His wisdom. So shall we wonder when, in the light of eternity, we fully understand for the first time the purpose and method of God's treatment of us.

Notice that Paul's wonder follows a brilliant and successful effort of the highest human intelligence to set forth God's treatment of Israel. To find out that His ways are unsearchable, is the sublime reward of careful endeavour to trace out, in the material or spiritual universe, the footsteps of God.

CHAPTER XI. is throughout a proof of the denial given in *v.* 1. Paul reminds us that the almost universal unfaithfulness is but a repetition of the days of Elijah. Now as then there is a faithful remnant. The punishment inflicted on the unfaithful has a purpose of mercy for the Gentiles, and for Israel. Even the cutting off of the unbelieving Jews and the reception of the believing Gentiles open a door of hope that if the Jews believe they will be received by God. As foretold in ancient prophecy, salvation awaits Israel. Chapter x. ended in the gloom of Israel's rebellion: ch. xi. has brought us out into the light of a glorious hope, and leaves us with the notes of an eternal song ringing in our ears.

DIVISION IV., comprising chs. ix.—xi., is throughout a proof that the Gospel is in harmony with God's earlier revelations. Paul was moved to undertake it by the presence around him of many who cling to these earlier revelations but reject the new revelation brought by Christ, and who do so because to them the new seems to contradict the old. He therefore approaches their case with sympathy: ch. ix. 1—5. But he shows that the Gospel, though it limits the heritage of Israel to a part of his offspring and condemns the rest, is in harmony with the government of God as revealed in the O.T., that is, with (*vv.* 6—13) His faithfulness, with (*vv.* 14—18) His justice, and with (*vv.* 19—23) His condemnation of those who resist Him; and that (*v.* 24—x.) the Gospel itself, its condition of faith, its announcement by messengers, and its reception among Jews and Gentiles, accord with prophecy. He thus confirms from the O.T. the condemnation pronounced by the Gospel on those who reject it. But God has not cast off His people. He will receive those who turn to Him, and will yet become the Saviour of Israel.

Chs. ix.—xi. are a reply to the objection that the Gospel cannot

be true, because it is inconsistent with God's earlier covenant with Israel. But it is more than a reply. To those who from childhood accepted the O.T., the far-reaching harmonies set forth in DIV. IV. must have been no small proof of the common origin of the Old and New. That Paul has a key which unlocks the casket of O.T. truth, proves his commission from Him who gave the casket. Nay more. To all men, the deep, underlying harmonies of the two covenants, taken in connection with their many and broad differences and apparent opposition, bear witness, not only that their author is the same, but that their author is divine.

Chs. ix.—xi. bear a relation to the Gospel as developed in chs. v.—viii. analogous to that of ch. iv. to the doctrine of Justification through Faith asserted in ch. iii. 21, 22; and to that of ch. iii. 10—20 in relation to ch. ii. The teaching of ch. ii. is so important to guard from perversion the teaching which follows that Paul hastens to confirm it from the Old Testament. And faith as the condition of salvation is a point so vital and yet so apparently new that Paul, as soon as he asserts it, proceeds to show its harmony with God's treatment of Abraham. Then, after expounding the Gospel as a whole, he looks at it, in chs. ix.—xi., in its bearing on the position and prospects of the Jews; and shows that, even looked at from this point, it accords with earlier revelation.

We now stand at the end of the doctrinal part of this epistle. The object for which Paul began to write has been to a great extent attained. After an introduction (chs. i. 18—iii. 20) needful to guard from mistake and perversion the new doctrines, he asserted them in chs. iii. 21—26, vi. 2—11, viii. 1—4, and developed them in chs. v.—viii.: and in chs. ix.—xi. he has shown that they accord with God's declarations and conduct as recorded in the Old Testament. It now remains for him to apply them to sundry matters of practical life.

DIVISION V. PRACTICAL LESSONS

CHS. XII.—XV. 13

SECTION XXXVIII

A CONSECRATED BODY AND RENEWED MIND

CH. XII. 1, 2

I exhort you then, brethren, by the compassions of God, to present your bodies a sacrifice, living, holy, well-pleasing to God: your rational service. [2] *And be not fashioned like this age; but be transformed by the renewal of the mind, in order that ye may prove what is the will of God, the good, and well-pleasing, and mature.*

1. Practical application of the foregoing exposition, and especially of its last words. **Then,** or *therefore:* since God is the Source, Agent, and Object of all we have and are. **Exhort:** to speak words prompting action or endurance: so *v.* 8, chs. xv. 30, xvi. 17. Exhortation amid difficulty or sorrow assumes the forms of encouragement or comfort: same Greek word in this sense in chs. i. 12, 2 Cor. i. 4, 6, vii. 6, 7, 13. **Compassions:** cognate word in ch. ix. 15: the various manifestations of God's pity for mankind, including specially the mercy of ch. xi. 32. **Present:** see under ch. vi. 13. **Your bodies:** including hands, feet, lips: parallel to "your members" in ch. vi. 13. We *present* our *bodies* when we resolve henceforth to use our bodily powers only to work out the purposes of God. This is practically the same as presenting ourselves to God: for only through our bodies does the world act upon us and we upon the world. But the mode of thought is different. This verse looks upon the man within as the priest who lays upon the altar, not the body of a dead sheep, but his own *living* body. **Sacrifice:** so Ph. iv. 18, Heb. xiii. 15, 1 Pet. ii. 5. Our bodies have now the sacredness associated in the mind of a Jew with the animals laid on the brazen altar. **Living:** in contrast to the dead animal sacrifices. While our feet and lips can run and speak, we give them to God that

they may run and speak for Him. This presentation makes our *bodies* **holy**, as it did the sacrificial animals: Ex. xxix. 37. Henceforth they exist only to work out His purposes: a close parallel in ch. vi. 19. **Well-pleasing to God**: so ch. xiv. 18, 2 Cor. v. 9, Eph. v. 10, Ph. iv. 18, Heb. xiii. 16, 21. Although their bodies had been defiled by sin, yet when laid upon the altar they were acceptable to God, acceptable because a man's own body is the noblest sacrifice he has to offer. **Service**: as in chs. i. 9, 25, ix. 4, Heb. ix. 1, 6. It keeps up the reference to Jewish ritual. To present our bodies, is the worship prescribed for us. **Rational**: a service rendered by the reasoning spirit within. The temple sacrifices might be merely outward and mechanical. These words are a comment on the foregoing exhortation.

2. Another general exhortation in addition to that in *v.* 1: **and be not etc. Fashioned-like**, or *along-with*: to share the same outward appearance: same word in 1 Pet. i. 14, a close parallel. Simpler cognate form in 1 Cor. vii. 31, Ph. ii. 8. **This age**: the whole current of life and influence around us, except so far as it is controlled by Christ: same words in 1 Cor. i. 20, ii. 6, 8, 2 Cor. iv. 4, Gal. i. 4, Eph. i. 21, ii. 2, etc. Cp. the word *ages* in chs. i. 25, ix. 5, xi. 36, xvi. 27. This current, unless we pull against it, will carry us along in its own direction, a direction always wrong; and will thus gradually fill us with its own spirit, and *fashion* us *like* itself, i.e. give to us an outward guise like its own. The following words show that Paul refers to a conformity of thought and purpose. The change required will affect the details of outward life only so far as these express the mind within. All attempts to distinguish the servants of God by external trifles have utterly failed. We must and ought to do, to a large extent, as those around us do. But God requires in us a total change of purpose; and of outward life only so far as it is a natural outworking of the inward change. **Transformed**: same word in Mt. xvii. 2, Mk. ix. 2, 2 Cor. iii. 18: an altered outward appearance resulting usually from inward change. On the word *form*, see under ch. ii. 20. *Be transformed*: a change progressing day by day. **Renewal**: same or cognate word in Tit. iii. 5, 2 Cor. iv. 16, Col. iii. 10, Heb. vi. 6. God gives up to blindness **the mind** of those who forget Him, so that moral objects no longer appear in their true colours. Depravity of the whole man is the result. Cp. ch. i. 24, 28. But to those who believe God gradually gives back the power of correct moral vision. And, since a man's character is formed by his estimate of what is good

or bad, the restoration of moral vision gradually changes the whole man. Thus *by the renewal of the mind*, we are ourselves day by day *transformed*. The two present imperatives denote gradual and opposite changes.

In order that etc.: purpose to be attained by the renewal and transformation, viz. that they may day by day (infinitive present) so test the actions possible to them as to find out **the will of God** concerning them. This we are better able to do as we grow in spiritual life: and this ability to discriminate is one of God's best gifts. The will of God is **good** (ch. vii. 12) in its effect upon us and others, **and well-pleasing** to God. **Mature**: worthy of full-grown men in Christ: see under 1 Cor. ii. 6. This is more accurate than the rendering *perfect*, which is very liable to be misunderstood. Paul desires that God may give to his readers clear moral insight; because only thus can they rightly estimate conduct and find out what God wills them to do, i.e. what is really for their good, pleasing to God, and worthy of Christian manhood. Thus the moral change resulting from mental renewal reacts on the mind and increases its power of discerning right and wrong. Notice here the first mention, except ch. viii. 13, of the gradual development of the Christian life.

These verses describe the effect of the Gospel on the entire man. The *body* is to be laid on the altar of God, the *mind* to be restored to primal clearness of vision, and the whole man to be *transformed*: in spite of influences tending to *fashion* him like the current of things around.

We have now entered the school of Christian morals. Its portal is a doctrine already taught in ch. vi. 13. Thus the Gospel leads to morality, this last beginning with spiritual worship.

SECTION XXXIX

VARIETY OF GIFTS

CH. XII. 3—8

For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone there is among you, not to think extravagantly, beyond what one must needs think, but so to think as to think soberly, as to each one

God has divided a measure of faith. [4] *For, just as in one body we have many members but the members have not all the same action,* [5] *so we, the many, are one body in Christ; but individually members one of another.* [6] *Moreover, having gifts of grace different according to the grace given to us, whether prophecy,* let it be *according to the proportion of* our *faith;* [7] *or ministry,* let us be found *in* our *ministry; or he that teaches, in his teaching;* [8] *or he that exhorts, in his exhortation; he that gives away,* let him do it *with singleness* of heart; *he that takes the lead, with earnestness; he that shows mercy, with cheerfulness.*

3. A reason for seeking to know "the will of God," viz. that we may thus obtain a correct and humble estimate of ourselves. **The grace given to me**: *v.* 6, xv. 15, Eph. iii. 2, 7, 8: cp. Rom. i. 5, 1 Cor. xv. 10. All good in Paul is through God's undeserved favour: consequently His *grace* is the channel **through** which he speaks to his readers. **I say . . . to everyone**: an emphatic warning, needed by all. **Think**: same word as *mind* in ch. viii. 5—7. *Think*-**extravagantly**: cp. *v.* 16, xi. 20. **One must needs think**: not surpassing the estimate which facts compel us to make. All beyond this is extravagant thought. **So as to think-soberly**: our aim being to form a reasonable estimate of what we are and can do. Notice the word *think*, denoting mental activity, and its compounds, four times in this verse.

As to each one etc.: a standard of self-measurement. **Faith**: assurance that God's words will come true: see note under ch. iv. 25. A man's *faith* determines his spiritual rank. Paul reminds his readers that *each one* has a **measure of** *faith*. That **God has divided** it to each, implies that faith in its various degrees is His gift. It is so because evoked in us by His promise and by influences leading us to accept it. Yet faith is none the less man's own free surrender to these influences. It is therefore both our own mental act and God's gift. The *measure of faith* includes both the strength of our assurance and the amount of truth embraced by it. Paul thinks here, as *vv.* 4—8 prove, of faith as producing various capacities for Christian service, in part supernatural capacities. Probably God first revealed to a man His purpose to give him some special endowment, and made the endowment conditional on his belief of this special revelation. By these special revelations and influences leading men to believe them God allotted to each a degree of faith. This special belief

was but a particular development of the faith by which each one accepted the general Gospel preached to all. Any self-conceit prompted by special capacity for usefulness is destroyed by remembrance that our spiritual stature is measured simply by the degree of our faith; and that this faith is God's gift to us, a gift possessed in some degree by all Christians.

4, 5. Further exposition of the foregoing words, as a reason against high thoughts, and especially of the emphatic word *to-each-one*. **In one body**: an all-important metaphor, peculiar in the Bible to Paul: see note under 1 Cor. xii. 30. **Members**: as in ch. vi. 13, a passage already recalled by ch. xii. 1. **The same action**: the eye, ear, hand, work in totally different ways. **The many**: as in ch. v. 15, 19. **In Christ**: in consequence of our inward union with Christ, we stand in a relation to each other similar to that of the various members of a human body. All high thoughts of self imply under-estimate of others: but we shall not under-estimate those bound to us by a tie of common interest similar to that of the various members of a living body. Same argument in 1 Cor. xii. 12—31. **Members one of another**: same word and similar argument in Eph. iv. 25.

6—8. Practical application of the foregoing metaphor. **Gifts-of-grace**: same word in chs. i. 11, v. 15, 16, vi. 23, xi. 29. It is used here and in 1 Cor. i. 7, vii. 7, xii. 4—31, 1 Tim. iv. 14, 2 Tim. i. 6, 1 Pet. iv. 10 as a technical term for capacities for various kinds of Christian work analogous to the various capacities of the different parts of the human body, viewing these as given to us by the undeserved favour of God. **Grace given**: as in *v.* 3. **Different**: cp. 1 Cor. xii. 4. That I have one faculty and my neighbour has another, is a gift to him and to me of the undeserved favour and infinite wisdom of God. Therefore, to boast over the less brilliant faculties of others, is to question the wisdom of Him who chose for, and gave to, each the powers he possesses.

6*b*—8. Practical and detailed application of the foregoing general statement. **Prophecy**: an extraordinary gift which made a man the mouthpiece of God: so Ex. iv. 16, vii. 1. See note under 1 Cor. xiv. 40. **Proportion**: literally *analogy*, one thing answering to another: cognate verb in Heb. xii. 3. The prophet must make his words to the people correspond to God's word to him, so far as by **faith** he comprehends it. He must say no more and no less than he believes that God has said to him. If he speak thus, the strength and compass of the prophet's *faith* will be the measure of his *prophecy*.

Ministry: honourable service by one man for another, like that of the Prime Minister and ministers of religion. Same word in chs. xi. 13, xv. 31, Lk. x. 40, Acts i. 17, 25, vi. 1, 4, 1 Cor. xii. 5, xvi. 15, etc. Cognate noun in chs. xiii. 4, xv. 8, xvi. 1, Mt. xx. 26, xxii. 13, xxiii. 11, Jno. ii. 5, 9: cognate verb in ch. xv. 25, Mt. iv. 11, viii. 15, xx. 28, xxv. 44, Jno. xii. 26. The same word is also a technical term for the lower of the two kinds of regular church-officers mentioned in the New Testament: Ph. i. 1, 1 Tim. iii. 8, 13. As thus used, we transliterate it *deacon*. It is unfortunate that the same Greek word requires the two English renderings *minister* and *deacon*. In Rom. xii. 7, the mention of other kinds of work suggests that the word denotes the regular office of a *deacon*, i.e. apparently one who attended to the material interests of the Church. A close parallel in 1 Pet. iv. 11.

He that teaches: see under 1 Cor. xii. 28. **Exhorts**: same word in *v.* 1; see note. It is distinct from *teaching*: so 1 Tim. vi. 2, iv. 13. Many can rouse to action and endurance those to whom they cannot impart knowledge. Money to **give away** is a gift of God's grace, and a capacity for usefulness. Paul warns us against the great danger in all generosity, a mixed motive. **He that takes the lead**: either as a regular church-officer or in some special Christian enterprise. The success of any combined effort depends so much on the energy of its leaders that a special obligation to earnestness rests upon them. **Mercy**: any kind of help to those in distress: so Rom. ix. 15, 16, 18, xi. 30, 31, 32. **With cheerfulness**: making the objects of our kindness feel that it is a pleasure to us to help them.

SECTION XL

GENERAL MAXIMS

CH. XII. 9—21

Love, let it be *without hypocrisy; detesting the bad, joining yourselves to the good.* [10] In *brotherly love, affectionate one towards another; in* giving *honour, one leading the other on;* [11] *in*

earnestness, not backward; in spirit, fervent; serving the Lord: [12] *rejoicing* in *hope; enduring affliction; continually devoting yourselves* to *prayer:* [13] *sharing the needs of the saints; pursuing hospitality.* [14] *Bless them that persecute you: bless and curse not.* [15] *Rejoice with them that rejoice: weep with them that weep.* [16] *Having the same mind, one toward another; not minding the high things, but being led along with the humble things. Become not prudent in your own eyes.* [17] *To no one giving back evil in return for evil; taking forethought* to do *things excellent before all men.* [18] *If possible, so far as in you* lies, *with all men keeping peace;* [19] *not inflicting justice for yourselves, but give place for the anger. For it is written, "To inflict justice* is *Mine, I will pay back again," says the Lord.* [20] *But, "If thy enemy is hungry, give him food; if he is thirsty, give him drink: for, in doing this, coals of fire thou wilt heap upon his head."* [21] *Be not conquered by the evil; but conquer the evil with the good.*

After exhortations to men specially endowed, we have now exhortations for all.

9—11. Love: to fellow-men. For the whole section deals with our treatment of those around: cp. ch. xiii. 10, 1 Cor. xiii. **Without-hypocrisy**: same word in 2 Cor. vi. 6, 1 Pet. i. 22, 1 Tim. i. 5, 2 Tim. i. 5, Jas. iii. 17. The prominence given in the Bible (e.g. ch. xiii. 8—10) to love toward our neighbour creates a danger of hollow profession of such love: and, than this, nothing is more hurtful. **Bad**: hurtful. This word is neuter, as is probably **the good.** The masculine form is found in Mt. xiii. 19, 1 Cor. v. 13, 1 Jno. ii. 13, 14. To **detest** that which is *bad*, is an essential element of genuine *love* to our neighbour. **Joining-yourselves**: same word in Mt. xix. 5, Lk. xv. 15, Acts v. 13, x. 28: to make common cause with, and put oneself on the side of, *the good.* Without this, detestation of the bad becomes mere censoriousness **Brotherly-love**: 1 Th. iv. 9, 1 Pet. i. 22: to brethren in Christ **Affectionate**: as members of one family. To our fellow-Christians, we owe special affection. Let **one** set **the other** an example **in** showing **honour** where it is due. **Earnestness**: as in *v.* 8: in reference here both to Christian enterprise and to our daily work: cp. Eccl. ix. 10. **Spirit**: our own spirit, the animating principle in man: as in chs. i. 9, viii. 16, Jno. xi. 33, 1 Cor. xiv. 14—16.

Fervent: boiling, a frequent metaphor for earnestness: a close parallel in Acts xviii. 25. Instead of **the Lord:** some Greek-Latin copies read *the opportunity*. It is more likely that a copyist would change this last, which perhaps he did not understand, into *the Lord*, than the converse. But this reading is found in so large a majority of MSS., versions, and fathers, in east and west, that we may accept it with confidence. The more intense our earnestness, the more need we remember that we act at the bidding of Christ and are doing His work. Our earnestness must be under His direction.

12, 13. Rejoicing in **hope:** ch. v. 2. **Enduring affliction:** ch. v. 3, 4. When the burden is heavy, we must pursue our path in spite of it. **Continually-devoting:** same word in Acts i. 14, Col. iv. 2, close parallels; also Rom. xiii. 6. Continuance in prayer and in expectation of an answer is a true test of our confidence in the value of prayer: Mt. xv. 21—28. **Sharing etc.:** see under ch xv. 26: by helping them in their **necessities,** we take these in some measure on ourselves and thus become partners with those who suffer. **Pursuing:** same word in chs. ix. 30, 31, xiv. 19: eager for opportunities for Christian **hospitality.** Cp. 1 Tim. iii. 2, Tit. i. 8, Heb. xiii. 2, 1 Pet. iv. 9, 1 Jno. iii. 17, Mt. x. 42.

14—16. The construction now changes from a series of unconnected participial clauses, each beginning with a conspicuous substantive, to a direct imperative. **Bless:** see under ch. i. 25. **Persecute:** same word as *pursue* in *v.* 13. Same word in same sense in 1 Cor. xv. 9, Gal. i. 13, 23. The persecutor pursues his victim. **To rejoice etc.:** the infinitive mood states tersely the disposition which Paul desires. Our joy in the success and joy of others is a very accurate measure of our spiritual stature. To rejoice at their joy, is more difficult than to pity them in sorrow. **The same mind:** same word as in *v.* 3: cp. 2 Cor. xiii. 11, Ph. ii. 2, iv. 2. "Let there be, in the breast of each, one thought and purpose touching all the others." The context implies that this must be according to Christ: cp. ch. xv. 5. This oneness of purpose is the true and only source of real Christian harmony. **Not minding:** suggested by the same word foregoing. Do not make it your aim to have to do with great matters; but be **led along** (or *carried away*) **with the humble things,** allowing them to have influence over you. **Prudent in your own eyes:** same words in ch. xi. 25: they recall Prov. iii. 7, LXX. To take to ourselves credit for prudence, i.e. mental alertness in common affairs, is to betray ignorance: for we are wise only so long as we are guided by the wisdom of God.

17—21. Evil in return for evil: cp. Mt. v. 39—45. **Taking forethought etc.:** from Prov. iii. 4, LXX. Be careful so to act as to have the respect of all. **If possible, so far as etc.:** admitting that cases may arise in which we cannot **be at peace with all men.** But this must be our constant aim. **Not inflicting-justice-for yourselves:** not taking the law into your own hands and inflicting what seems to you just punishment and thus defending yourselves. Same verb in 2 Cor. x. 6, Lk. xviii. 3, 5, Rev. vi. 10, xix. 2: cognate nouns in *v.* 19, Lk. xviii. 7, 8, xxi. 22, Acts vii. 24, 2 Cor. vii. 11, 2 Th. i. 8, Heb. x. 30, 1 Pet. ii. 14, and in Rom. xiii. 4, 1 Th. iv. 6. Its root-idea is justice, and especially just punishment: a simpler form of the same word in 2 Th. i. 9, Jude 7, Acts xxviii. 4. The rendering *avenge* and *vengeance* (A.V. and R.V.) brings in associations of thought unworthy of a ruler. **Give place** (cp. Lk. xiv. 9, Eph. iv. 27) **for the anger:** leave the case to God, who is angry with, and will punish, all sin, especially in His servants. **To-inflict-justice, is Mine:** from Dt. xxxii. 35; quoted also in the same form as here, a form differing from both Heb. and LXX., in Heb. x. 30. To injure others because they have injured us, is to put ourselves in the place of the great Judge. **But if etc.:** instead of punishing those who injure us, we must give place for God's anger, and treat them with kindness. This whole verse (*v.* 20) is taken word for word (LXX.) from Prov. xxv. 21. **Coals of fire:** an Eastern metaphor for severe and overwhelming punishment. We cannot punish a man who is doing us harm more severely than by trying to do him good: and this kind of punishment is the most likely to lead him to repentance and salvation: cp. 1 Sam. xxiv. 17. **Be not conquered etc.:** a concluding epigrammatical precept. If we retaliate, we do wrong; and thus evil gains a victory over us. But, if the injury be met with kindness, it develops our moral character, and thus does us good. In this way, **by** doing **good,** we gain a victory over **evil.** And, if our kindness lead the adversary to repentance, goodness gains a double victory. The alternative here mentioned is the only one. If a man do us wrong, we must always either conquer, or be conquered by, the evil.

Notice that in this section, which treats of Christian morals, Paul refers three times to the Book of Proverbs: another example of his respect, in every point, for the Old Testament.

Each verse of this section will repay most careful study. Observe the easy and natural flow, and the intense reality, of the whole. There are no formal divisions, and no natural order. But each

thought suggests some other suitable thought: and the whole sets before us, with wonderful completeness, the principles which ought to regulate our dealings one with another.

SECTION XLI

OBEY THE RULERS OF THE STATE

CH. XIII. 1—7

Let every soul submit to the *superior authorities. For there is no authority except* ordained *by God: and those that exist have been ordained by God.* [2] *So that he who sets himself against the authority withstands the ordinance of God. But they who withstand will receive for themselves judgment.* [3] *For the rulers are not a fear to the good work but to the evil. But dost thou wish not to fear the authority? Do the good; and thou wilt have praise from it.* [4] *For he is a minister of God to thee for good. But if thou dost the evil, be afraid: for not in vain he bears the sword: for he is a minister of God, a minister of justice for anger to him who does the evil.* [5] *For which cause* it is *necessary to submit, not only because of* his *anger but also because of conscience.* [6] *For* it is *because of this* that *ye pay tribute. For they are public ministers of God, to this very thing continually devoting themselves.* [7] *Repay to all* what ye *owe; tribute, to whom* ye owe *tribute; custom, to whom custom; fear, to whom fear; honour, to whom honour.*

1. Every soul: the submission must be inward, reaching down to the seat of life: cp. ch. ii. 9, Acts ii. 43; Eph. vi. 6, Mt. xxii. 37. **Superior authorities**: another topic, the Christian's duty to the civil power, specially important at Rome, the seat of empire. We must **submit** because civil rule is ordained **by God**, who has so constituted society that men are compelled to appoint rulers and thus create authority. **And those that exist etc.**: a more definite statement. Not only is civil authority in the abstract a work of

God, but *the existing* rulers have been put **by God** in their place of power. These unproved assertions will be discussed below.

2—4. Practical consequence of the foregoing. **Sets-himself-against**: cognate to *ordained* and **ordinance. The authority** has been *set up* by God: consequently he who *sets himself against* it withstands that which God has *set up*. They who do this **will receive judgment**: sentence will be passed upon them, evidently a sentence of condemnation: same words in Jas. iii. 1. **For themselves**: emphatic, as in ch. ii. 5. A reason for this judgment is stated in *v.* 3, viz. because **the rulers** are on the side of right and opposed to wrong. **A fear**: an object inspiring fear, as in all languages: cp. Gen. xxxi. 53, 1 Tim. i. 1. **To the good work**: action personified as if capable of fear. **Minister**: see under ch. xii. 7. In his office of civil ruler, he is doing the work **of God. To thee**: set up by God to do thee **good**: cp. ch. viii. 28. **Dost the evil**: other side of the alternative in *v.* 3*a*. **Not in vain: the sword** which **he bears** is no mere ornament. **For he is a minister of God**: emphatic repetition word for word. Because the ruler is an officer appointed by God, as asserted in *v.* 1, they who do right may expect from him *praise* and they who do wrong have reason for *fear*. **A minister-of-justice**: one who will inflict due punishment: cognate to words in ch. xii. 19; see note. **For anger**: in contrast to *for good*.

5. Practical result of the truth just stated. It is **necessary to submit not only** for fear of punishment but **because of conscience**: i.e. in order to have an inward assurance that we are doing right: cp. 1 Cor. x. 25, 29, 1 Pet. ii. 19.

6. Proof that our conscience binds us to submission. We actually **pay tribute.** Paul assumes, and all will admit, that we are under moral obligation to do so; and asserts that this admitted obligation involves submission. *Tribute:* a tax on persons or subject states: same word in Lk. xx. 22, xxiii. 2, 1 Macc. viii. 4, 7. **Public-minister**: different from, and stronger than, *minister* in *v.* 4, and denoting a public and sacred officer: e.g. in Ex. xxviii. 35, 43, etc. for Aaron's ministry at the altar. Same word in Rom. xv. 16, 27, 2 Cor. ix. 12, Ph. ii. 17, 25, 30, Heb. i. 7, 14, viii. 2, 6, ix. 21, x. 11, Lk. i. 23, Acts xiii. 2. Whether they know it or not, civil rulers, in proportion as they rule well, are performing and **continually-devoting-themselves** (same word in ch. xii. 12) to a sacred ministration laid upon them by God. Paul argues that this admitted moral obligation proves that civil rulers are ordained by God.

7. Practical application of the foregoing. **Custom:** a tax on goods: same word in Mt. xvii. 25, 1 Macc. x. 31, xi. 35. **Fear:** the reverence due to a ruler: cp. Eph. vi. 5, 1 Pet. ii. 18. **Honour:** outward recognition of worth of any kind: as in ch. xii. 10, 1 Tim. vi. 1, 1 Pet. ii. 17, iii. 7. Appreciation of the dignity of office is independent of our estimate of the man who holds the office.

A very close parallel to *vv.* 1—7 is found in 1 Pet. ii. 13—17.

We will now examine the unproved assertions on which the above argument rests, viz. that the abstract principle of government is from God and that the existing rulers have been put by God in their place of power.

Human society is so constituted that the instinct of self-preservation compels men to set up a form of government, i.e. to commit to some men power over the rest. Everyone knows that a bad government is almost always better than no government: and this proves that God wills men to live under rule. But God has not prescribed a definite form of rule: consequently the universal principle of government assumes an infinite variety of forms. We also notice that, nearly always, opposition to the men actually in power tends to weaken and destroy the principle of government and leads towards anarchy. How frequently the murder even of a bad ruler has been followed by utter lawlessness and by infinite injury to the nation! Consequently, opposition to the individuals in power is practically in most cases opposition to the divine principle of government. Observing this, and remembering that nothing takes place without the foresight and permission of God, we may say, as Paul does, that the existing rulers, by whatever steps they mounted the throne, have been put on it by God. For God created the felt necessity for government which was their real stepping-stone to power: and He did so in full view of the persons into whose hands, throughout all ages, the power would fall. Cp. Dan. ii. 37, 38, 2 Sam. xii. 8, Isa. xxxvii. 26, xlv. 1—5. We notice further that all bad conduct tends to weaken, and good conduct to strengthen, a government. Consequently, rulers are compelled, for the maintenance of their position, to favour the good and oppose the bad. This necessity must be from the Ruler of the world. We infer therefore that God, who has laid on men the necessity of appointing rulers, has laid on rulers the necessity of rewarding the good and punishing the bad; and has done this in order to make rulers instruments to accomplish His own purpose of kindness to the good and of punishment

to the wicked. Thus rulers are, perhaps unconsciously, ministers of God.

These considerations are abundant reason for loyal obedience to civil authority. Since rulers are compelled by their position to favour the good and punish the bad, resistance to them generally proves that we are in the wrong ; and will be followed by the punishment which they cannot but inflict on evil-doers. Hence the motive of fear should prompt obedience. And, since resistance to existing rulers tends to weaken and destroy that principle of government which God has set up for the good of the race, we ought to submit to them for conscience' sake. That we feel ourselves morally bound to pay taxes imposed without our consent or in opposition to our judgment, and that all admit the right of the ruler to enforce payment, confirms further the divine origin of his authority.

The only case in which resistance to a ruler does not weaken the divine ordinance of government is that in which overthrow of one government is quickly followed by establishment of a better. The teaching of Rom. xiii. 1—7 will make us very cautious in joining an attempt to effect such change, lest in overturning a bad ruler we overturn all rule. But where a government so far forgets its mission as to be no longer a praise to the good and a terror to the bad, and where its subjects are able to replace it by a better, Paul's words do not forbid them to do so, even by force of arms. By so doing, they do not overthrow, but defend from desecration, the ordinance of God. Such rulers cannot appeal to Paul's teaching : for they have put themselves outside the class he describes.

A similar exception occurs sometimes in the obligation (Col. iii. 20) of children to obey their parents. A child is sometimes bound to disobey and even resist a parent ; but only when he fails to act a parent's part. Such exceptions do not lessen the universal obligation to obedience. Nor does the occasional necessity to resist a government lessen our obligation to obey in all ordinary cases.

This section must have been written before the civil power began deliberately to oppose Christianity, as it did in the later years of Nero and at intervals afterwards. For, although the opposition of the State to Christianity did not altogether destroy the obligation to obedience, it introduced into the question difficulties which no writer on the subject could pass over in silence. This section is therefore a mark of the early date of the epistle, and thus confirms its genuineness.

This reference to the civil power may have been suggested to Paul by his readers' nearness to the seat of imperial rule. But the immense importance of the subject sufficiently explains its mention in a letter which deals generally with the Gospel of Christ and the Christian life. It was needful to state clearly that loyalty to Christ involves loyalty to social order.

SECTION XLII

LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOUR

CH. XIII. 8—10

Owe nothing to anyone; except to love one another. For he who loves his *neighbour has fulfilled law.* [9] *For this, "Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not murder, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not desire," and if* there be *any other commandment, it is summed up again in this word, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself."* [10] *Love works no evil to his neighbour. Love therefore* is *a fulfilment of law.*

8. Owe nothing etc.: negative repetition of "repay to all what ye *owe*," in *v.* 7. Free yourselves from all debts by paying them. **Except to love one another:** a debt from which we can never release ourselves by payment. However much we have done for our neighbour, we are still bound to love him. The debt due to the officers of the State suggests another debt due to all our fellow-citizens: cp. ch. i. 14. **For he who loves etc.:** reason for paying our debt of universal love. **Law:** the general principle of "do this and live," which took historic form in the Law of Moses. **Fulfilled:** filled up by action what the abstract principle of *law* delineates in outline. [The Greek perfect calls attention to the abiding result of such fulfilment of law.]

9, 10. Proof of *v.* 8*b*, concluding with a restatement of it. **Thou shalt not desire:** as in ch. vii. 7. The various precepts in Lev. xix. are **summed up again** in *v.* 18 in this one

general precept. **Love**: not an emotional affection, but, like God's love, a principle of active benevolence. It is therefore consistent with detestation of whatever is bad in our **neighbour**: cp. ch. xii. 9. **Love works**: the principle personified, as in 1 Cor. xiii. It moves us to beneficent activity, and thus keeps us from doing harm. But this is the purpose of the above commands. **Therefore love** is a **fulfilment of law.** It *fills-up* in action the outline of conduct sketched by the principle of law. Same word as *fulness* in chs. xi. 12, 25, xv. 29.

Verse 9 is in very close agreement with Mt. xxii. 39, 40, Mk. xii. 31 ; and confirms these Gospels as correct embodiments of the actual teaching of Christ. See under Gal. v. 14: cp. 1 Tim. i. 5.

These verses imply that, even to believers, the Law is still valid as an abiding rule of conduct : cp. ch. viii. 4. But, since this great commandment is altogether beyond our power to obey, it is virtually a promise that God will Himself breathe into us the love He requires : a promise fulfilled in those who believe it. Consequently this commandment, which at once secures the homage of our moral sense, is to us no longer law but a part of the Gospel. It has been buried in the grave of Christ, and with Him has risen into new life.

SECTION XLIII

PUT OFF THE WORKS OF DARKNESS

CH. XIII. 11—14

And this, knowing the season, that the *hour* has come for *you at once to arise from sleep. For now is salvation nearer to us than when we believed.* [12] *The night has advanced; and the day is come near. Let us put off then the works of the darkness, and let us put on the weapons of the light.* [13] *As in* the *day, let us walk becomingly; not with revelling and drunkenness, not with debauchery and wantonness, not with strife and emulation;*

[14] *but put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and for the flesh take no forethought, to* gratify *desires.*

11, 12*a*. **And** do **this,** viz. "love your neighbour." **Season:** as ch. iii. 26, etc.: it is defined by the **hour to arise from sleep.** Cp. Eph. v. 14, 1 Th. v. 6. **For now etc.:** reason for rising from sleep, viz. because the time already elapsed since we put faith in Christ has brought us so much nearer to the day of complete deliverance. **Salvation:** final deliverance from the conflict of life; as in chs. v. 10, x. 10. **Believed:** the mental act by which we received as true the testimony of Jesus, as in 1 Cor. iii. 5, Acts iv. 4 etc.; as distinguished from the abiding state of those who "believe," e.g. Rom. i. 16, iii. 22. **The night:** the present obscurity, in contrast to **the** eternal **day.** These words emphasise the foregoing metaphor.

12*b*. Practical application of the metaphor. **Put-off:** as night-clothes are laid aside in the morning: same word in Acts vii. 58, Eph. iv. 22, 25, Col. iii. 8, Heb. xii. 1, Jas. i. 21, 1 Pet. ii. 1. **The works of the darkness:** our past acts, in harmony with the darkness in which we walked, not knowing where we were going or what we were doing: a list given below. **Put-on:** constantly used of clothes and weapons, e.g. Mt. vi. 25, 1 Cor. xv. 53, 54, Gal. iii. 27, Eph. iv. 24, vi. 11, 14, Col. iii. 10, 12, 1 Th. v. 8. **Weapons of the light:** cp. ch. vi. 13, 2 Cor. vi. 7. Since the night is almost over and the day is dawning, Paul bids us wake up from sleep and throw aside the sinful acts which belong to the darkness now passing away: and, since the dawning light can overspread the land only by conflict and victory, in which we are called to share, he bids us gird on our sword as soldiers of the light.

13, 14. Expansion, positive and negative, of the foregoing exhortation. **As in day:** in the light of the dawning day, which even before the sun has risen is sufficient to guide our steps. It keeps up the metaphor of *v.* 12. **Becomingly:** with good appearance suitable to the daylight in which we **walk.** Same word in 1 Th. iv. 12, 1 Cor. xiv. 40. **Revelling etc.:** sins belonging specially to the night. They are *the works of the darkness* in *v.* 12. **But put on etc.:** parallel to *put on the weapons of the light. Put on* **the Lord Jesus Christ:** as men put on clothing, which, though distinct from them, yet when put on becomes almost a part of them. Paul bids us enter into union with Christ so close that He will become the close environment in which we live and move. Same phrase in Gal. iii. 27: cp. Eph. iv. 24, Col. iii. 10, a somewhat

different conception. Since union with Christ enables us to do God's work even in face of enemies, to *put on Christ* is (*v.* 12) to put on the weapons of the light: cp. 1 Pet. iv. 1. **No forethought:** as in ch. xii. 17. **The flesh:** the material and constitution common to all human bodies and characterized by various **desires:** cp. ch. vi. 12, Gal. v. 16, 24. The prohibition to take forethought for the flesh is limited to one improper aim of such forethought, viz. to gratify its *desires*.

The metaphor of *v.* 12 deserves careful study. The present life is compared to a night spent in rioting and sleep. The coming of Christ will bring the eternal day. Already it is dawning; and in the light of that day-dawn His servants walk. The light is in conflict with darkness; and it is our privilege to join in the battle and hasten the victory. Paul announces that morning has come; that the time for revelry has gone. He bids the sleepers to awake, to cast aside the character in which they have wrapped themselves and lain so long, unconscious of the realities of the coming day, and to grasp their sword to do battle for the light. He bids them put on, as their complete defence and their resistless weapon, the character and living presence of their anointed Master, Jesus; and urges them, since the night is past, to think no more of indulgence or revelry.

On the spiritual significance of light and darkness, compare carefully 1 Th. v. 1—11, Eph. v. 7—16.

SECTION XLIV

DO NOT JUDGE THY BROTHER

CH. XIV. 1—12

Him that is weak in faith, receive; so as not to pass judgment on reasonings. [2] *One man has faith to eat all things; but the weak one eats herbs.* [3] *He that eats, let him not despise him that eats not; and he that eats not, let him not judge him that eats: for God has received him.* [4] *Who art thou that judgest another man's domestic servant? to his own lord, he stands or falls.*

And he shall be made to stand: for the Lord is able to make him stand. [5] *For one man esteems day above day: but another esteems every day. Let each one, in his own mind, be fully assured.* [6] *He who regards the day, regards* it *for* the *Lord. And he that eats, eats for* the *Lord: for he gives thanks to God. Also he that eats not, for* the *Lord he eats not; and gives thanks to God.* [7] *For not one of us lives for himself; and not one of us dies for himself.* [8] *For both if we live, we live for the Lord; and if we die, we die for the Lord. If then we live, and if we die, we are the Lord's.* [9] *For to this end Christ died and lived* again, *that both of dead and living He may be lord.* [10] *And thou, why dost thou judge thy brother? Or also thou, why dost thou despise thy brother? For we shall all stand before the judgment-seat of God.* [11] *For it is written,* "*I live,*" *says* the *Lord:* ("*to Me shall bow every knee, and every tongue shall make acknowledgment to God.*" [12] *Therefore each of us, concerning himself, will give account to God.*

1. A new topic, viz. our duty to certain of our fellow-Christians. The repetition of this exhortation in ch. xv. 7, marks the completion of the discussion. **Weak in faith**: one whose grasp of the teaching of Jesus is not so full and firm as to break down the barriers erected by training and circumstances: contrast ch. iv. 19. Cp. 1 Cor. viii. 7—12. **Receive**: as a brother in Christ: same word in *v.* 3, Phlm. 17, Acts xviii. 26, xxviii. 2; xvii. 5. **So as not etc.**: in order to avoid pronouncing **judgment on** matters open to discussion, i.e. on conflicting **reasonings.** To reject a man because he cannot grasp the Gospel in its fulness, is to pronounce judgment on the thoughts and doubts of his heart. This we have no right to do; and therefore are bound to receive him.

2. Statement of the special case which called forth the above general exhortation. **Has faith etc.**: he so fully believes the words of Christ, e.g. Mk. vii. 15, that he can eat anything without fear of defilement. **Herbs,** or *vegetables:* i.e. as his only food: practical result of the weakness of his faith. This abstinence from all meat and (*v.* 21) from wine is not explained by the Mosaic distinction of clean and unclean animals. But all is explained if we suppose that Paul refers to the matter discussed in 1 Cor. viii., where see my notes. The weak brother looks upon everything offered to an idol as forbidden and polluting. This is implied in

Dt. vii. 25, 26 ; and is confirmed by Acts xv. 29. So careful is he to avoid eating in pagan cities such as Rome or Corinth that which, unknown to him, has been consecrated to a false god, that, like Daniel, he abstains from all meat and all wine. And he believes that those men sin who eat all kinds of meat without asking (1 Cor. x. 27) where it came from. But he has not grasped the teaching of Christ in Mk. vii. 18 : "nothing that enters into a man can defile him." Else he would know (Tit. i. 15) that "to the clean all things are clean." We are not surprised that the man of strong faith, who knows that an idol is but an empty name, is in danger of looking with contempt (cp. *vv.* 3, 10) on this needlessly scrupulous brother. Notice that Paul leaves the right or wrong of the matter an open question, but counsels concession in practice. Neither of these could he do if the continued obligation of the Mosaic distinction of meats were in question : contrast Gal. ii. 5, v. 1—12. But, if he refers to idol sacrifices, his teaching here accords with 1 Cor. viii.—x. And the prohibition to touch that which belongs to an idol, though temporary, rested on deeper grounds than did the Mosaic regulations about food. This explanation is confirmed by the contrast of Jews and Gentiles in ch. xv. 8, 9 ; and by the discussion of the same matter at Corinth, where Paul probably wrote this epistle. The absence of any specific mention of idol sacrifices is a very uncertain ground of objection to this view : for Paul's readers knew to what he referred. The express mention of the matter in 1 Cor. viii. 1 arose probably (cp. 1 Cor. vii. 1) from its having been a matter of special inquiry.

3*a*. An exhortation for each of the above classes. **Despise :** because he cannot fully grasp the teaching of Christ. This passing exhortation, repeated in *v.* 10, will be supported by strong arguments in *vv.* 13—23. **Let him not judge :** appeal to the weak in faith.

3*b*, **4**. First argument against judging. **God has received him :** into His favour and service : same word and argument in ch. xv. 7. Paul assumes, as we ought to do unless we have proof to the contrary, that all church-members are true servants of Christ ; and therefore assumes that God has accepted this man against whom the only objection is that he eats meat. A solemn consideration for all who condemn their fellow-Christians. It may be that God has accepted them. **Who art thou etc.?** a personal appeal supporting the foregoing argument. **Domestic-servant :** same word in Acts x. 7, Lk. xvi. 13, 1 Pet. ii. 18. We serve Christ

under His own eye, as members of His household. **Lord**: see under ch. i. 4. **His own** *lord:* developing an idea in **another-man's** *servant*. **He-will-be-made-to-stand**: although he eats meat. **The Lord**: Christ, as almost always in N.T., except (cp. *v.* 11) in quotations from O.T.: cp. 1 Cor. viii. 6, Eph. iv. 5. The proof that this man *will be made to stand* is that his continuance in the Christian ranks is wrought by the power, and therefore depends on the will, of Christ. This being so, He only has a right to pronounce judgment on him.

5. It is uncertain whether the word **for** is genuine, i.e. whether this verse is given as a reason for the foregoing or merely added without note of connection. The external evidence is almost equally divided. But the insertion of the word *for* gives, as I understand the argument, the true connection of the verses, a connection however not evident at first sight, and therefore easily overlooked by a copyist. This easy explanation of the omission favours the genuineness of the word; and seems to me to outweigh a slight preponderance possibly of the external evidence. The editors are divided. Tischendorf inserts the word *for*, as do Lachmann and Westcott, who however put it in brackets and thus mark it as doubtful. Tregelles and R.V. omit it without note. The latter ought at least to have given it a place in their margin.

Esteems: same word as *judge* in *vv.* 3, 4, 10, 13. **Day above day**: he judges one day to be above another. The other man pronounces a like sentence on **every day.** To which of the two classes in *v.* 2, these two classes belong, Paul does not say. The order of clauses decides nothing: for it varies in *vv.* 3 and 10, as in ch. x. 9 and 10. Moreover, Gal. iv. 10, Col. ii. 16 suggest irresistibly that Paul did not set day above day. We cannot suppose that he set one day above the others in opposition to some who gave undue sanctity to every day of the week: and of any such we have in the N.T. no hint. To count every moment absolutely devoted to God, and therefore holy in the highest sense, is the very essence of the new life in Christ and is clearly taught in *v.* 8. Undoubtedly the man to whom all days were sacred would look upon all food as clean. We shall see that this view gives to Paul's argument the force of a personal appeal. Its bearing on the divine institution of the Lord's Day, I have discussed in a special note under Gal. iv. 11.

Let each etc.: let him form an opinion of his own, so that his action may spring from his own conviction, not from that of others. To do something merely because others think it right, is always

humiliating and demoralising. Notice that Paul leaves the matter of days an open question.

6. A comment on the observance of **the** sacred **day,** to which is joined a similar comment on the action both of him that *eats* and of him that *eats not.* **Regards**: same word as *mind* in chs. viii. 5, xii. 3, 16. He makes *the day* which he *judges* (*v.* 5) to be *above* other days a special object of thought. But he does this **for** the **Lord,** i.e. in order to please his Master, Christ. The words which follow in the A.V. are certainly spurious, and mar the argument. They give undue importance to the matter of days; which is introduced here only to support the argument about eating meat. **And he that eats,** like the man who regards the day, **eats for** the **Lord**: he believes that his Master has given him this food, and is pleased to see him eat and enjoy it. **For he gives thanks**: proof of this. **To God**: the Giver of all good. No man *thanks God* for that which he believes that God has forbidden. Therefore this man's thanks proves that he believes his eating to be pleasing to God. **And he that eats not etc.**: the weak and strong put side by side as alike loyal to the great Master; their loyalty being in each case attested by their **thanks to God.** One man eats meat and thanks God for it: the other abstains in order, as he thinks, to please Christ; and eats his plainer food with equal gratitude.

The argument is this. Evidently the man who pays special honour to one day does so in order to please Christ: his mode of spending the sacred day proves this. He therefore claims our respect for his loyalty to Christ, even if we differ from him about the right way of showing it. His loyalty forbids us to doubt that his Master will support His faithful, though perhaps mistaken, servant. Just so, the man who eats all kinds of meat and thanks God for it may claim that his thanks prove that he believes that by eating he is pleasing God. This argument would have the more weight with the men of weak faith because it describes, in reference to another matter, their own conduct and motive.

If this exposition be correct, the matter of sacred days is introduced merely to illustrate and enforce what Paul has to say about abstinence from meat, the matter he has now in hand. He merely asks the man who eats no meat to credit the man who eats it with a motive as good as that which prompts some to keep a sacred day.

7, 8. A broader statement supporting the chief point of *v.* 6. Not only does the man before us *eat for* the *Lord*, but **not one of us lives** or **dies for himself,** i.e. to please himself. We both eat

and drink and use all the powers which life gives us to work out Christ's purposes: and, when we die, we pass into another world, in order, in a nobler sphere, to continue the same work. Similar teaching in ch. vi. 11, 2 Cor. v. 15. **We are the Lord's:** cp. 1 Cor. iii. 23: inference from the foregoing. If the purpose of our life and death be to do Christ's work, then we belong to Him and are His servants. And, if so, none but our Master has a right to judge us.

9. Confirmation of the foregoing description of the aim of our life and death, from the purpose of the death and resurrection of Christ. We were created (Col. i. 16) for Christ, in order that we may find in His service our highest joy: but sin separated us from Him. To make it just (Rom. iii. 26) to pardon our sin and to reinstate us in the position for which we were created, God gave Christ to die; and (ch. iv. 25) raised Him from the dead in order that His resurrection might be the sure ground of justifying faith: **to this end Christ died and lived** again. **Dead and living:** cp. Lk. xx. 38. Notice the solemnity of our position as servants of Christ. By judging our brethren, we usurp the place of Him who died and rose from the dead in order that they may be His servants and He their Master.

10. An appeal to both parties, to him who **judges** and to him who **despises.** Notice the emphatic repetition of **thy brother,** one who claims a brother's affection. **For we all etc.:** Paul's answer to his own questions. *We all:* including Paul and those who judge and those who despise their brethren. **Judgment-seat:** same word in 2 Cor. v. 10, Acts xxv. 6, 10, 17. **Of God:** "who (Rom. ii. 16) will judge the secrets of men through Jesus Christ:" cp. ch. iii. 6. That we shall ourselves stand before the bar of God, warns us neither to judge nor despise others.

11. Proof of the foregoing, from Isa. xlv. 23. **Every knee . . . every tongue:** visible and audible homage: a close parallel in Ph. ii. 11. **Make-acknowledgment:** either (Mt. iii. 6, etc.) of sins against God; or (Rom. xv. 9) of the greatness and goodness of God. The latter use is so frequent in the O.T. (e.g. Pss. cv. 1, cvi. 1, cvii. 1, LXX.) that we must accept it here. These great words describe evidently a voluntary and universal submission. This, we have no reason to expect until the final consummation described in 1 Cor. xv. 28. But Paul quotes words from God asserting solemnly, through the lips of a prophet, that a time will come when universal homage will be paid to Him.

This quotation, which looks forward to a world in which all shall

bow to God, must be read in connection with Paul's solemn words in Ph. iii. 19: "many walk . . . enemies of the cross of Christ, whose end is destruction." The complete solution of this paradox lies hidden in the purpose of God. It does not imply that all who now live will ultimately bow to Christ.

12. Inference from the quotation. **Each of us about himself:** a solitary responsibility. **Account:** same word and sense in Mt. xii. 36, 1 Pet. iv. 5, Ph. iv. 15, 17. God's solemn announcement that a time will come when universal homage will be paid to Him implies clearly that He claims this homage: and, if so, He will require an account from everyone who resists this claim. If we walk in the light of that day, we shall see our own littleness and be thus saved from contempt of our brethren; we shall feel our responsibility and thus be kept back from judging them.

In § 44, Paul speaks chiefly to the men who condemn others for eating all kinds of meat. He tells us incidentally that these scruples arise from weakness of faith. But, instead of dismissing the matter by apostolic authority, he discusses it from the weak brother's own standpoint. He thus sets us an example of not despising our brethren; and gives us principles valid for various matters in actual life in which we have no express command to guide us. He says, Beware lest you condemn a man for that which Christ accepts as a mark, though perhaps a mistaken one, of loyalty to Himself; and remember how soon you will render an account of your service.

Paul refers here to conduct not inconsistent with loyalty to Christ, and therefore not absolutely sinful. In other cases, e.g. ch. xvi. 17, 1 Cor. v. 3, he himself condemns the guilty person, and requires the Church to punish, and the members to withdraw from, him.

SECTION XLV

BE CAREFUL NOT TO INJURE THY BROTHER

CH. XIV. 13—23

Let us not then any longer judge one another: but judge this rather, not to set a stumbling-block for thy *brother, or a snare.* 14 *I know and am persuaded in* the *Lord Jesus that nothing* is

common of itself; except that, to him who reckons anything to be common, to that man it is *common.* [15] *For, if because of food thy brother is made sorrowful, no longer dost thou walk according to love. Do not, by thy food, destroy him on whose behalf Christ died.* [16] *Let not then your good thing be evil spoken of.* [17] *For the Kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in* the *Holy Spirit.* [18] *For he who in this serves Christ is well-pleasing to God and approved by men.* [19] *Let us therefore pursue the* things *of peace and the* things *of mutual edification.* [20] *Do not because of food pull down the work of God. All things* are *clean: but* it is *evil to the man who eats with stumbling.* [21] It is *good not to eat meat, nor drink wine, nor* anything *in which thy brother stumbles.* [22] *What faith thou hast, have with thyself before God. Happy* is *he that judges not himself in that which he approves.* [23] *But he that doubts, if he eats, stands condemned: because* it is *not from faith. And all that* is *not from faith is sin.*

13. A practical exhortation summing up Paul's teaching to the more scrupulous brethren, followed by another to the stronger brethren supporting the exhortation already given to them in *vv.* 1, 3, 10. Paul thus returns to the first matter of this chapter. **Judge this**: make no decision about your brother's character, but make this decision about your own future conduct: same word in *v.* 5, 1 Cor. ii. 2, 2 Cor. ii. 1. **Stumbling-block**: against which one may strike his foot: ch. ix. 33, Lev. xix. 14. **Set a snare**: same words in Judith v. 1: see under ch. xi. 9. Resolve to do nothing by which your brother may be hindered or thrown down, or entrapped by the enemy.

14. Am-persuaded: as in chs. viii. 38, xv. 14. **In** the **Lord**: cp. ch. ix. 1. Paul's assurance comes from his inward union with Christ. Formerly, he was of another opinion. **Common**: opposite to *clean:* cp. *v.* 20, Acts x. 14, 15, 28. It denotes something forbidden to the sacred people. **Of itself**: limitation to the assertion **that nothing** is *common.* It is further expounded in the words following, **except etc.** In spite of the above universal truth, if anyone eats what he believes to be defiling, he is defiled by it: for he has done what he believes to be wrong: cp. 1 Cor. viii. 7.

Paul here asserts plainly the absolute abrogation of the ceremonial law, of which distinction of food was a conspicuous feature

and which forbad to touch things offered to idols: Lev. xi., Dt. vii. 25, 26. He thus re-echoes Mk. vii. 1—23, Acts x. 15.

15. For, if etc.: reason for the above exception, viz. because disregard of our brother's liability to be defiled by that which is in itself clean is inconsistent with *love*, which is the essence of the new life in Christ. **Because of food:** the meat eaten by the man of strong faith. **Sorrowful:** through spiritual injury. It is the forerunner of destruction. **Walk:** life looked upon as movement forward, as in ch. vi. 4. **According to love:** love to our brethren guiding our steps. This guiding principle is rejected by those who, rather than give up a certain kind of *food*, i.e. meat offered to idols, so act as to injure their brethren.

Do not etc.: a direct exhortation, based on the foregoing. **By thy food:** emphatic repetition: a contemptuous description of the price of our brother's destruction. **Destroy:** the ultimate result of making him *sorrowful* by causing him spiritual injury. All such injury tends to, and may end in, final ruin. See note on p. 87. Paul charges the man who eats without taking into account the possible injurious effect of his eating, with spiritual murder of the man of weak faith. That spiritual injury may lead to destruction, is a very strong reason for avoiding whatever may cause injury. **On whose behalf Christ died:** an absolute contrast to him who, rather than refrain from certain kinds of meat, so acts as to ruin a brother in Christ.

This verse implies clearly the possibility of the ultimate ruin of those for whom Christ died, of those who are now, as Paul assumes throughout, servants of Christ. If we were sure that God would not permit the injury occasioned by our conduct to go to the length of final ruin, we could not be kept back from it by fear of destroying him for whom Christ died. See note on Final Perseverance on p. 304.

16—19. Great general principles bearing on the case before us. **Your good thing:** citizenship in *the Kingdom of God*, including the strong man's faith. It is therefore fuller than "my liberty" in 1 Cor. x. 29. **Evil-spoken-of:** literally *blasphemed*, as in chs. ii. 24, iii. 8. Another reason for the above exhortation. If you cling, even at the risk of injury to your brother, to your undoubted right to eat what you like, you will lead the heathen to speak evil of that religion which is the common *good* of weak and strong. They will think that what you value most in the Gospel is that it breaks down the restrictions of Judaism and allows men to eat anything.

17. Further exposition of *your good thing*. **The Kingdom of**

God: the eternal kingdom to be set up at the return of Christ, of which we are already citizens: so 1 Cor. iv. 20, vi. 9, 10, xv. 50, Gal. v. 21, Eph. v. 5, Col. i. 13, iv. 11, 1 Th. ii. 12, 2 Th. i. 5, 2 Tim. iv. 1, 18. It is a link connecting the teaching of Paul with the Gospels. **Righteousness**: doing what God approves, as in ch. vi. 16, 20. **Peace**: harmony with our brethren. **Joy in the Holy Spirit**: a joy wrought by the Spirit in those to whom He is the element of life and thought, by revealing, through the Gospel of the cross of Christ, God's love towards them and His purposes of mercy for them: cp. ch. v. 2, 11, 1 Th. i. 6. It is contrasted with the pleasure of **eating and drinking** as a distinctive mark of the Kingdom of God.

18. Another general principle supporting that in *v.* 17. **In this**: righteousness, peace, and joy, as inseparable elements of the one Christian character: cp. Gal. v. 22. **Serves Christ**: the essence of the new life: *vv.* 4, 6—9. They who obey Christ by doing right, keeping peace with others, and rejoicing in the Holy Spirit are **well-pleasing to God,** and therefore citizens of His Kingdom. If so, we can waive our right to eat and drink what we like without losing the full privilege of citizens. **Approved**: a good appearance after trial: cognate words in chs. i. 28, ii. 18, xii. 2; v. 4. *Approved* **by men**: in contrast to *evil-spoken-of*. If you do right, you will have the intelligent respect of the heathen around: but if you claim to the full your right in the matter of food, without considering the effect on your weaker brethren, you will bring an evil report on that religion which is your chief good.

19. Practical inference from *vv.* 17, 18. **The** things **of peace**: all that tends to harmony. **Pursue**: as in ch. xii. 13: cp. Heb. xii. 14, 1 Cor. xiv. 1. **Edification**: literally *building-up*: so ch. xv. 2, 1 Cor. xiv. 3, 5, 12, 26, Eph. iv. 12, 16, 29. This common metaphor represents the Church and the spiritual life as a building in process of erection: cp. ch. xv. 20, 1 Cor. iii. 9—12, Eph. ii. 21, 22. The building makes most progress in those who are at peace with each other. Consequently they who pursue mutual edification will pursue peace.

20, 21. Paul now returns to the specific matter in hand, after stating great principles which ought to rule our whole conduct. **Because of food**: conspicuous repetition of the chief point in hand **Pull-down**: same word in 2 Cor. v. 1, Gal. ii. 18: it keeps before us the metaphor of a building. **Do not,** for a piece of *food, pull down* what **God** has built: cp. 1 Cor. iii. 17. This implies that God

sometimes permits men, not only to hinder, but to undo, His spiritual work.

All things clean: parallel to *v.* 14. **But** it is **evil etc.**: an exception to the foregoing universal assertion. **Eats with stumbling**: whose eating occasions, and is thus accompanied by, the spiritual fall of another or of himself. Such eating is a stone against which he or others strike their foot; and is therefore *evil*. On the other hand, it is **good** even to go so far as **not to eat meat, nor to drink wine, nor** to take anything else, if they hinder or ensnare our brother or weaken his spiritual life. *Wine:* offered to idols: cp. Dt. xxxii. 38, Isa. lvii. 6. The danger referred to arises from the force of example; as explained in 1 Cor. viii. 10. What we do, others will do, even though they believe it to be wrong, because they see us do it. Thus our conduct, in itself right, will lead to what in their case is wrong. Our love to our brethren binds us to refrain from such action.

On the bearing of this principle on total abstinence from intoxicants, see my note under 1 Cor. viii. 13.

The evidence for and against the words *or is ensnared or is weak* is equally balanced. Tischendorf and Westcott omit them; as do the Revisers. But these last note them in the margin as added by "many ancient authorities." Tregelles inserts them, but expresses doubt in his margin. They add nothing to the sense.

22, 23. An appeal to the man who **has faith,** in support of the foregoing principle. **Have with thyself**: do not announce it by claiming all the privileges it confers. For faith is in itself so good that we can afford to forgo some points of its outward manifestation and be satisfied to enjoy it in our own hearts **before God. Happy** is **he etc.**: proof how good faith is. A man of weak faith, even when he has decided that an action is right, is uncertain in his decision; and is ever sitting in judgment on himself and asking whether he is doing right. Consequently he is full of moral doubt and weakness. But the man who has obtained by faith a firm hold of God's revealed will forms a stedfast decision and dismisses all doubt. He does what he **approves** without **judging himself. But he that doubts etc.**: further proof of the value of faith by description of the man weak in faith. **If he eats,** he **is condemned** by God to suffer spiritual loss, **because** his conduct does **not** spring **from faith,** i.e. from an assurance that he is doing right. **And all etc.**: a universal truth explaining why he that does that about which he stands in doubt is condemned. Such action does not flow from loyalty to Christ, and therefore partakes of the nature

of **sin.** This verse is a warning to the man of weak faith that so long as he doubts he is bound to abstain.

From this section we learn that we may, without design and without knowing it, not only injure but destroy those who are now servants of Christ; and may do this by actions in themselves lawful, and even by claiming the rights which the Gospel has given us. Paul's argument is a development, in view of these solemn truths, of the great commandment quoted in ch. xiii. 9. A link of connection is found in ch. xiv. 15, "not according to love." If any act of ours is likely to injure a brother, we are bound, by the law of love, to refrain from it. This obligation, Paul strengthens, by reminding us that Christ died for this weak brother; that men are watching our conduct, and will judge us accordingly; that, to surrender our right to do as we like, by no means implies a surrender of our rights as citizens of the Kingdom; and that our faith gives us inward advantages over the weak brother so great that we can afford to make this minor sacrifice for his good. For these reasons we are bound to consider in all we do, not merely whether our actions are right in themselves, but what will be their effect upon others. This great principle has a wide and various bearing on the details of every-day life.

This principle admits of what seems to be an exception but is really a further development. It often happens that an action is an occasion of harm to one man and a means of good to another. For example, in the case before us, Paul would have to consider whether abstinence from meat would lessen his bodily strength, and thus inflict on those for whom he lived and worked an injury greater than that occasioned to the weaker brother by the example of Paul eating meat. We must ask whether on the whole an action is likely to do more good or harm; and act accordingly. And thus, though we shall sometimes do that which may occasion injury to some of our brethren, we shall always act from the same divine principle of universal love. Under 1 Cor. xi. 1, I have given a summary of a similar argument on the same subject.

Some MSS., versions, and fathers, put after *v.* 23 the words of ch. xvi. 25—27: see my note.

SECTION XLVI

THE STRONG OUGHT TO HELP THE WEAK

CH. XV. 1—6

Moreover, we owe it as a debt, we the strong ones, to bear the weaknesses of those not strong, and not to please ourselves. [2] *Let each of us please his neighbour, for* his *good, for edification.* [3] *For also Christ did not please Himself, but* it was with Him *according as it is written, "The reproaches of those reproaching Thee fell upon Me."* [4] *For so many things as were before written were written for our teaching, in order that through the endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we may have the hope.* [5] *And may the God of the endurance and of the encouragement give to you to have the same mind one with another according to Christ Jesus,* [6] *in order that with one accord, with one mouth, ye may glorify God,* the *Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

1, 2. Another reason for abstaining from food which injures others, suggested by the above contrast of those who have much and those who have little faith ; followed by a general exhortation. **The strong**: cp. ch. iv. 20, "made strong by faith." **Not-strong**: cp. 1 Cor. viii. 9, 11. The man weak in faith is altogether weak. **Bear** (or *carry*) **the weaknesses etc.**: put a restraint upon ourselves because of their various kinds of weakness, thus bearing a burden, light to us who are made strong by faith, but dangerously heavy to them: cp. Gal. vi. 1, 2. Where mutual love is, weakness gives a claim to help from the strong. Thus strength of faith, so far from being a ground of boasting, lays upon us an obligation to help the weak. And if, as is often the case, our stronger faith is a result of more favourable circumstances, our obligation is still greater. **Not to please ourselves**: selfishness, the true source of refusal to bear the burdens of the weak. **Please his neighbour**: exact opposite of pleasing self. **For** his **good**: our aim in pleasing him. This makes the difference between a right and wrong pleasing of men : Gal. i. 10, Eph. vi. 6, 1 Cor. x. 33, 34. **For edification**: see under ch. xiv. 19: the kind of *good* we are to have in view

3. Supreme example of pleasing, not self, but others. **It** recalls the argument in ch. xiv. 15. **As it is written:** what Christ did, stated in the words of Ps. lxix. 9. This reminds us that they who follow **Christ** walk also in the steps of the ancient worthies. In this quotation lies an argument from greater to less. If Christ, instead of gratifying self, submitted to sufferings caused by His countrymen's inexcusable hostility to God, in order to save them from the well-merited consequence of their hostility, can we refuse to save a brother-servant of Christ from the terrible danger to which his weakness exposes him, by submitting to a restraint not otherwise needful?

4. Reason for the above quotation, viz. that the O.T. was written to teach us who live in later days, and thus to encourage us to persevere. **Written for our teaching,** i.e. to teach us. This purpose, so far above the thought of the human writer, reveals a hand divine in the Jewish Scriptures: so chs. iii. 19, iv. 24. **In order that etc.:** all divine teaching has a further moral and spiritual purpose. **Endurance,** or *perseverance:* as in chs. ii. 7, v. 3. **Encouragement,** or *exhortation:* see under chs. xii. 1, i. 12. **Of the Scriptures:** source of *endurance* under hardship and of *encouragement* to endure. **The hope:** described in ch. v. 2, 4. **May have** or *hold the hope:* ultimate purpose of the teaching in *the Scriptures*, and of the *encouragement* and *endurance* derived from them.

5. Sudden transition from the means, to the ultimate Source, of our *endurance* and *encouragement:* so *v.* 13, ix. 5, xvi. 25, Eph. iii. 20. Our *perseverance* is His gift; and the *encouragement* derived from the Scriptures is His voice. He thus reveals Himself in a special character as **the God of** our **endurance and encouragement:** cp. *v.* 13, xvi. 20. **The same mind:** as in ch. xii. 16. Paul prays that the Author of perseverance may also give them harmony. This mutual harmony must **accord** with the mind of **Christ.** Paul prays that each of them may have towards his brethren a disposition like that which moved Christ to suffer reproach in order to save from the punishment of their sins those who reproached God. This prayer is practically an exhortation.

The use of the word *endurance*, which always implies difficulty, to describe our treatment of weaker brethren, and the example of Christ under the raillery of the enemies of God, remind us how difficult it sometimes is to act towards weaker brethren in a spirit of love. Our Christian character is seldom so severely tried as

when we are put to inconvenience by the spiritual childishness of members of the Church.

6. Further purpose to be gained by *the same mind*, and consequently a further motive for harmony. **With one accord:** else the **one mouth** is hypocrisy. But it is also needful that inward harmony find suitable outward expression. **Glorify:** as in ch. i. 21. We *glorify God with* our *mouth* when, by telling His greatness and goodness, we express our own admiration and call forth admiration of God in those who hear us. Our oneness of heart and voice, being evidently God's work, itself shows forth His glory: so Jno. xvii. 21. **God, and** the **Father of our Lord Jesus Christ:** a distinctive N.T. name of God: 2 Cor. i. 3, Eph. i. 3, Col. i. 3, 1 Pet. i. 3; 2 Cor. xi. 31, Eph. i. 17. To the Jews, He was the God of Abraham: for through Abraham He revealed Himself as their God. He has revealed Himself to us as *God and* as the *Father* who gave for us His Son, *our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Paul desires for the Roman Christians a harmony of spirit which will fill every mouth with one song of praise, and exalt God in the eyes of mankind. This cannot be unless the strong in faith deny themselves for the good of their weaker brethren. He urges this as their bounden duty, and points to the example of Christ. By using the word *endurance*, he admits the difficulty of the task; but he reminds his readers that to prompt such endurance the ancient Scriptures were written. And, knowing that even the divine word is powerless without the divine Speaker, he prays that God, who enables them to maintain their Christian confidence, will also give them the spirit of harmony. He desires this in order that the weak, instead of losing the little faith they have, may join with the strong in praise to God.

SECTION XLVII

THAT ALL MAY PRAISE GOD TOGETHER

CH. XV. 7—13

For which cause receive one another, according as also Christ received you for glory of God. [8] *For I say that Christ is become a minister of circumcision, on behalf of* the *truth of God, in order*

to confirm the promises of the fathers; [9] *and that the Gentiles may glorify God for mercy, according as it is written,* "*Because of this I will make acknowledgment to Thee among* the *Gentiles; and to Thy name I will sing a psalm.*" [10] *And again he says,* "*Be glad, Gentiles, with His people.*" [11] *And again,* "*Praise, all Gentiles, the Lord; and let all the peoples praise Him.*" [12] *And again Isaiah says,* "*There will be the root of Jesse, and He that rises up to rule Gentiles: on Him will Gentiles hope.*" [13] *And may the God of the hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, in order that ye may abound in the hope, in* the *power of* the *Holy Spirit.*

7. For which cause: because, as implied in *v.* 6, Christian unity brings glory to God. **Receive**: as in ch. xiv. 1. Unless we respect the scruples of our weaker brethren, we shall drive them from us. **According as etc.**: keeping before us the example of Christ, as in *vv.* 3, 5, ch. xiv. 15. **Christ received you**: cp. ch. xiv. 3. **For glory of God**: purpose to be obtained by receiving one another, viz. to show forth the greatness and goodness of God, and thus to evoke admiration for Him: cp. ch. iii. 7. For the same end, Christ received you.

8, 9*a*. Fuller exposition of the truth involved in *Christ received you.* **Minister**: see under ch. xii. 7. **Circumcision**: as in ch. iii. 30. Christ made Himself a servant of the Jewish nation, in order that, by fulfilling a part of the ancient promises, He might prove that God is true and faithful. He proved this in order to make **the promises** still unfulfilled a **firm** ground on which we may rest our hopes for the future: cp. ch. iv. 16, 2 Cor. i. 20. **And that the Gentiles etc.**: another purpose for which Christ became a minister of the Jews. **For** (*on-behalf-of*) **mercy**: cp. 1 Cor. x. 30; also Rom. xi. 30—32. Christ was born in Judæa and laboured among the Jews, not only to reveal to them the faithfulness of Him who gave the promises, but also in order that the same *mercy* might reach *the Gentiles* and prompt heathen lips to **glorify God**: cp. *vv.* 6, 7.

The distinction of Jews and Gentiles, so prominent in this epistle, but lost sight of since ch. xi. 32, here meets us again. It suggests that the *weak in faith* were chiefly Jews, and *the strong ones* chiefly Gentiles: cp. Acts xxi. 20. If so, the united praise of weak and strong, which in *v.* 6 Paul desires, would also be the united praise

of Jews and Gentiles. And, if so, the quotations in *vv.* 9—12 have an evident bearing on the matter in hand, viz. our treatment of the weaker brethren. We have thus an explanation of the apparently sudden change of subject.

9b—**12.** The foregoing purpose of Christ, viz. that both Jews and Gentiles may praise Christ, **accords** with ancient prophecy. In Ps. xviii. 49, the writer says that surrounded by Gentiles he will give acknowledgment and praise to God; implying that they will join in or approve this praise. So Dt. xxxii. 43 implies a common joy in God of Jews and Gentiles. In Ps. cxvii. 1, the Gentiles are called on to praise God. Paul quotes Isa. xi. 10 from the LXX., which is less accurate than our versions: but the difference does not touch the subject before us. **The root** lives unseen in the ground after the trunk has been cut down. The prophet announces a time when from the forgotten family **of Jesse** a new sprout **rises** to be an ensign around which Gentiles will gather. The passage refers evidently to the Kingdom of Christ, and foretells that in its blessings the Gentiles will share.

13. Prayer concluding Paul's treatment of the case of the weaker brethren, and the main body of the epistle. As in *vv.* 5, 6, he rises from the Scriptures to *God*. By giving us a hope of glory, resting on His own nature, God reveals Himself to us in a new aspect as **the God of the hope.** **Fill**: so that your entire being and thought and life be permeated. **Joy**: suggested by *v.* 10. **Peace**: harmony in the Church, as in ch. xiv. 19. **In believing**: element in which we have joy and peace: cp. ch. v. 1, 2, 1 Pet. i. 8. **In order that etc.**: further purpose to be attained by our fulness of joy and peace. **Abound**: as in chs. iii. 7, v. 15. **In** the **power etc.**: parallel with *in believing*. Faith is the human condition and channel of joy: the **Holy Spirit** is the inward divine Agent who by His felt *power* working in us evokes confident **hope** of blessings to come: cp. ch. xiv. 17, "joy in the Holy Spirit." Paul prays that God, who has already given us hope, may also give us joy and harmony, in order that we may thus obtain a still firmer and richer hope: and he remembers the human channel and the divine Agent of these blessings, belief of the promises, and an inward working of the Almighty Spirit.

Verses 7—13 support, by arguments suggested in *vv.* 5, 6, the exhortation in ch. xiv. 1. Paul begs us to receive the weaker brethren in order that the united praise of them and of us may show forth the grandeur of God. He reminds us that for this end Christ received us, that this united song of praise was foretold in

ancient prophecy, and that peace with our brethren will increase the hope with which by God's grace we already look forward to the coming glory.

The subject discussed in chs. xiv. 1—xv. 13 has long ago passed away. We are all of Paul's opinion now. To us, idols have lost all power to pollute: we should not hesitate to eat food prepared for a heathen feast. But this rather increases than decreases the value of Paul's discussion: for it compels us to look, not at one special case, but at a great principle bearing on the every-day life of us all.

On opening the subject, Paul announces himself an advocate of the weaker brethren. He does not hold their views; but he defends their rights. But, before pleading their cause, he warns his clients not to condemn the men against whose contempt he now defends them. He then turns to the strong, and tells them their duty to the weak. He teaches the solemn lesson that our conduct may influence the destiny of some around us. We are therefore bound to abstain from whatever may injure our brother, lest by injuring we ruin him. To act in forgetfulness of the influence of our example, is to set aside that love which is the very essence of the Christian life, to ignore the obligation laid upon us by our superior light, to set aside the example of Christ, and to hinder the purposes of blessing which were the song of the ancient seers and which Christ came to accomplish.

We now stand at the end of the main body of the epistle. DIV. V. (chs. xii.—xv. 13) contains, without any formal order, a wonderful outline of Christian morality. Paul has indicated its root, viz. self-consecration to God; and its chief means of growth, an increasing knowledge of the will of God. He has set before us correct views of ourselves and our work; and has taught us the principles which ought to regulate our conduct towards our fellow-Christians, especially those whose views differ from our own, our fellow-citizens, those who injure us, and the rulers of the State. Throughout, DIV. V. is similar, in matter and tone, to 1 Corinthians.

Paul's chief purpose in writing the epistle is now accomplished. He has asserted and developed the new doctrines, and has shown their harmony with the Jewish Scriptures; and has taught us to apply them to matters of daily life.

CONCLUSION OF THE EPISTLE

SECTION XLVIII

PAUL'S APOSTOLIC OFFICE AND WORK

CH. XV. 14—21

But I am persuaded, my brethren, also I myself, about you that yourselves also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another. 15 *But more boldly have I written to you in part, as recalling to your mind, because of the grace given to me from God,* 16 *in order that I may be a public minister of Christ Jesus for the Gentiles, announcing as a sacred work the Gospel of God, in order that the offering up of the Gentiles may be made acceptable, being sanctified in* the *Holy Spirit.* 17 *I have then this exultation in Christ Jesus,* touching *the things that refer to God.* 18 *For I will not dare to speak of any of the* things *which Christ has not worked out through me for obedience of Gentiles, by word and work,* 19 *in* the *power signs and wonders, in* the *power of* the *Holy Spirit; so that I have, from Jerusalem and* the country *around as far as Illyricum, fulfilled the Gospel of Christ:* 20 *making this* a point of *honour so to preach, not where Christ has been named, in order that I may not build upon another's foundation,* 21 *but, according as it is written, "They to whom no announcement was made about Him shall see; and they who have not heard shall understand."*

The rest of the epistle contains (ch. xv. 14—33) personal matters between Paul and his readers, and (ch. xvi.) salutations and doxology.

14. Persuaded: as in ch. viii. 38. Not only does universal report (ch. i. 8) proclaim your faith, **but I myself also** am convinced that the report is true. **Goodness:** doing good to others. **Also yourselves are etc.:** consequently the foregoing exhortations do not involve a claim to superior goodness. **To**

admonish others, we need both *goodness* and **knowledge. Able also etc.:** so that the foregoing warnings might seem needless.

15. But more boldly etc.: than would seem to be consistent with their goodness and knowledge. **In part:** only chs. xiv. 1—xv. 7 being in anything like a bold tone. **As recalling to your mind:** admitting that they already know what Paul has told them. **Grace given to me:** as in ch. xii. 3. **From God:** as in ch. i. 7. **Because of** God's favour to Paul, he ventures to speak *more boldly* than his readers' goodness and knowledge might seem to warrant.

16. God's purpose in making Paul an object of His favour, viz. **that** he **may be** a **public** and sacred **minister** (as in ch. xiii. 6) **of Christ Jesus for the Gentiles.** Cp. Gal. i. 16. The words following describe further this sacred ministry. To announce **the Gospel of God,** i.e. the glad tidings of salvation which God sent into the world, was the **sacred-work** which God in His favour had given to be Paul's only occupation. Similarly, He separated Aaron from all secular work that he might devote himself to the ritual of the tabernacle: and similarly (ch. xii. 1) He calls all believers to the sacred work of presenting their own bodies a sacrifice to God. **That the offering etc.:** definite purpose of this sacred work. *Offering:* a sacrificial term: so Acts xxi. 26, xxiv. 17, Eph. v. 2, Heb. x. 10, 14, 18. Paul was sent to preach the Gospel in order that he might lead the Gentiles to a life of devotion to God, and thus lay them as a sacrifice on the altar: cp. chs. xiv. 7—9, vi. 13, xii. 1. **Acceptable:** *v.* 31, 2 Cor. vi. 2, viii. 12; close parallel in 1 Pet. ii. 5. **Sanctified etc.:** condition of acceptability: cp. "for sanctification," in ch. vi. 19, 22. This devotion to Himself which God requires is realised in us by the inward working of the **Holy Spirit:** cp. *v.* 13. The Spirit is essentially holy: i.e. His every thought, purpose, influence tends towards God: and He seeks to carry others along in His own direction. Consequently they who live, think, and act **in** the *Holy Spirit* live only for God. Thus are they *sanctified*, and become an *offering acceptable* to God. To lead **the Gentiles** to this consecration, was Paul's sacred work.

Notice the courtesy and modesty of *vv.* 14—16. Paul apologizes for the earnest tones which seem to betray a consciousness of superiority, and assures his readers that he knows their goodness and their ability to instruct each other. He does but recall to their mind what they already know. His boldness in so doing is prompted not so much by their need as by God's undeserved

kindness to himself, by the sacredness of the office to which God has called him, and by His purpose to make him a channel of blessing to the Gentiles, blessing wrought not by Paul but by the Spirit of God.

17. Exultation: as in chs. ii. 17, v. 3. **In Christ Jesus:** prompted by inward contact with Him. **That refer to God:** same words in ch. iv. 2. As Paul contemplates God's kindness, his own sacred office, and the grandeur of the work committed to him, his spirit rises with joy and praise, these prompted by inward union with Christ in matters pertaining to God.

18, 19. Reason for Paul's exultation, viz. the work already done through his agency. **I will not dare:** cp. ch. v. 7: suggesting the spiritual peril of exaggeration. **Worked-out:** as in chs. i. 27, ii. 9, etc. **For obedience of Gentiles:** to lead them to obey: cp. ch. i. 5. **By word and work:** the word preached and miracles wrought by Paul: cp. 2 Cor. xii. 12. **Signs:** acts conveying a meaning deeper than that which lies on the surface: so ch. iv. 11, 1 Cor. xiv. 22, 2 Th. iii. 17, Rev. xii. 1, 3. **Wonders:** strange events calling forth astonishment: so Ex. vii. 3, Dan. vi. 27, 2 Cor. xii. 12, 2 Th. ii. 9, Heb. ii. 4, etc. A miracle is a *sign*, inasmuch as it teaches truth: it is a *wonder*, in that it evokes astonishment. **In the power of the Holy Spirit:** the inward agent, as the Gospel and the miracles were the outward and visible instruments, through which *Christ wrought out* His works of power: same words in *v.* 13. Through the inward agency of the Holy Spirit, Christ wrought miracles by the hands of Paul; and through the power thus manifested He led the heathen to believe the Gospel preached by Paul. He then produced in the hearts of those who believed, by the power of the same Spirit, the spiritual results which follow faith. As examples, see Acts xiv. 10, xxviii. 6, 8.

Jerusalem: for Paul's work there, see Acts ix. 28, 29. **Illyricum:** probably what was called Greek Illyria, or Illyria proper, roughly corresponding to the present Turkish province of Albania. These words seem to imply that Paul preached there; possibly in the journey mentioned in Acts xx. 2. **Fulfilled the Gospel:** announced it fully, so that the word attained its goal by entering into and changing the hearts of men: cp. Col. i. 25. Paul announced to all within his reach "all the counsel of God:" Acts xx. 27.

20, 21. A further detail in Paul's mode of preaching. **Making** it a point of **honour:** same word in 2 Cor. v. 9, 1 Th. iv. 11. He resolved **not** to **build on another's foundation:** cp. 1 Cor. iii. 10.

In so doing, he was acting in harmony with an ancient prophecy, Isa. lii. 15. The quotation is word for word from the LXX.; differing slightly from the sense of the original. But the difference is unimportant. The prophet foretold that in the days of the coming Servant of God the kings of the earth will see that which had not been told them, and will understand that which they had not heard: a clear prophecy that men who at one time knew nothing about the Gospel will experience its benefits. Upon this declaration of God's purpose, Paul acted in preaching the Gospel. An interesting coincidence, in Acts xiii. 47.

Paul has now justified his bold tone in chs. xiv. 1—xv. 13, if such it be, by exulting both in (*vv.* 15, 16) the work God has given him to do and in (*vv.* 18—21) the work Christ has already done through him. A remembrance of his office and his success makes him bold to speak.

SECTION XLIX

PAUL'S PLANS FOR THE FUTURE AND PRESENT BUSINESS

CH. XV. 22—33

For which cause I was also hindered these many times *from coming to you.* [23] *But now no longer having room in these regions, and having for many years a longing to come to you,* [24] *whenever I go to Spain—for I hope when passing through to behold you, and by you to be sent forward there, if first in part I be filled with your company.*

[25] *But now I go to Jerusalem, ministering to the saints.* [26] *For it has pleased Macedonia and Achaia to make some contribution for the poor among the saints in Jerusalem.* [27] *For* it *has pleased* them to do so: *and their debtors they are. For, if in their spiritual things the Gentiles have been partners, they owe it as a debt also in the fleshly things to do public service for them.* [28] *When then I have completed this and have sealed to them this*

fruit, I will go on through you to Spain. [29] *And I know that when coming to you I shall come in fulness of blessing of Christ.*
[30] *Moreover, I exhort you, brethren, through our Lord Jesus Christ and through the love of the Spirit, to wrestle along with me in prayers to God on my behalf,* [31] *in order that I may be rescued from the disobedient ones in Judæa, and my ministry for Jerusalem may be acceptable to the saints;* [32] *in order that in joy I may come to you through* the *will of God and may along with you be refreshed.* [33] *And the God of peace* be *with you all. Amen.*

22. Paul comes now to personal matters, and to his own movements, thus returning, after expounding the Gospel, to the line of thought, and even the words, in ch. i. 8—15. The principle of action stated in *vv.* 20, 21 **hindered** him from going to Rome: for Christ was already preached there, and in other places nearer He was still unknown.

23, 24. But now: in contrast to past hindrances. **Room in these regions:** places in which Christ is not yet preached. In all the great centres between Jerusalem and Italy, Paul had (*v.* 19) preached the Gospel. Therefore, in order to carry out his maxim, he must *now* go further from home. **Longing:** as in ch. i. 11. **To come to you:** cp. ch. i. 13, Acts xix. 21. **Go to Spain:** a Roman province where many Jews lived, and where perhaps no other Christian teacher had been. Such a journey opened to Paul a prospect, without deviating from the principle in *vv.* 20, 21, of visiting the Roman Church of which he has heard so much and in which he takes so deep an interest.

At this point the sentence is broken off, as in ch. v. 12, to explain what Paul's going *to Spain* has to do with his desire to go to Rome. **When-passing-through:** Rome being on the way *to Spain*. **Sent forward:** as in Acts xv. 3, xxi. 5, etc.: to be helped forward, and perhaps accompanied part of the way, by Roman Christians. This was an additional reason for calling at Rome on his way to Spain. **Filled with your company:** explained in ch. i. 12. The shortness of Paul's stay would permit him to receive only **in part** the benefit to be derived from intercourse with them.

These verses are a mark of genuineness. No forger, in a letter to the Roman Church, would make Paul's first visit to Rome subordinate to a journey to Spain.

25, 26. But now: in contrast to plans for the future. **To**

Jerusalem: as described in Acts xx. 3—xxi. 17. **Ministering**: see under ch. xii. 7. It frequently denotes attention to bodily wants: Mt. viii. 15, xxv. 44, Lk. viii. 3. **For the saints**: cp. Heb. vi. 10. By taking money for the poorer members, Paul did service for all: for he lessened a burden which fell upon all. **Macedonia**: a Roman province containing Neapolis, Philippi, Amphipolis, Apollonia, Thessalonica, and Berœa: cp. Acts xvi. 9—12, xviii. 5. **Achaia**: the Roman province containing Corinth and Athens: cp. Acts xviii. 12. The order here seems to have been the order of time in which the contributions were made: cp. 2 Cor. viii. 2 with ix. 4. **Contribution,** or *partnership*: same word in Acts ii. 42, 1 Cor. i. 9, x. 16, 2 Cor. viii. 4, ix. 13, xiii. 13, Heb. xiii. 16: cognate verb in Rom. xii. 13, xv. 27, Ph. iv. 15. It denotes a partnership with others in something good or bad. By sending this money, the Christians in Macedonia helped those at Jerusalem to bear the burden of their poverty. **The poor among the saints**: consequently, the community of goods (Acts ii. 45) had passed away.

27. A comment on the contribution. **Debtors**: cp. chs. i. 14, viii. 12. Then follows proof of the debt. **Their spiritual things**: cp. ch. i. 11, Eph. i. 3: the blessings of the Gospel, given first to the Jews, and by Jews carried to the Gentiles. Thus **the Gentiles became-partners** (cognate to *contribution* in *v.* 26) with the Jews in the blessings promised to Abraham. That the Gentiles were thus sharers of benefits wrought by the Spirit of God in the hearts of Jews, laid upon them an obligation to give to the Jewish Christians, now in want, a share of their material wealth. **Fleshly things**: pertaining to the body: very suitable in the present case where money was probably needed for food and clothing. Same contrast in 1 Cor. ix. 11. **Public-service**: cognate words in *v.* 16, xiii. 6, 2 Cor. ix. 12, this last in the same reference. By laying upon them an obligation to help the Jewish Christians, God gave them a public and sacred work to do. On this contribution and its great spiritual importance, see 1 Cor. xvi. 1—4, 2 Cor. viii. ix., and my notes. By performing it, the Christians of Macedonia and Achaia offered to God an acceptable sacrifice: Ph. iv. 18, ii. 17.

28, 29. A few concluding words about Paul's proposed visit to Rome and Spain. **Completed**: same word in same reference in 2 Cor. viii. 6, 11. **Fruit**: as in chs. i. 13, vi. 21, 22. This contribution was a natural outworking of the spiritual life of the Gentiles, according to the laws of that life: cp. "fruit of the Spirit' in Gal. v. 22. **Sealed**: a solemn attestation, as in ch. iv. 11.

By handing over the money to the Christians at Jerusalem, Paul solemnly and publicly declared that it had been collected for them by the Gentiles, and that it was a fruit of the Christian life of these foreign converts. The Church would thus be able to use it without hesitation, and with gratitude to God and to their benefactors.

Blessing: see under *blessed* in ch. i. 25. *Blessing* **of Christ**: the supreme good which Christ conveys by His word. **Fulness**: as in ch. xi. 12, 25. Paul will come with his hands *full* of the benefits which Christ gives through the Gospel. With this assurance, compare ch. i. 11.

30. A touching request for his readers' prayers, supported by an appeal to their loyalty to their Master, **Jesus Christ,** whose work Paul is doing, and to **the love** with which **the Spirit** fills their hearts. *Love:* to our fellow-men, as in chs. xii. 9, xiii. 10, xiv. 15, 1 Cor. xiii., and always when not otherwise defined. *Of the Spirit:* source of this love: cp. Gal. v. 22. To refuse Paul's appeal, is therefore to resist the Spirit. **Wrestle**: literally *contend* as *in the* public *games:* same word in Col. i. 29, iv. 12, Lk. xiii. 24. It suggests intense effort, like that of an athlete. In prayer we struggle with intense spiritual effort against spiritual foes. Paul begs his readers to join **with** him, and thus help him in this conflict.

31. Specific purpose of this request for help in prayer. Verses 31, 32 thus expound *on my behalf* in *v.* 30. For interesting coincidences and marks of genuineness, see 2 Th. iii. 2, the only other epistle written in prospect of a visit to Jerusalem; and Acts xx. 22, 23, xxi. 10—13, which refer to the visit Paul now has in view. Cp. 2 Cor. i. 11. In former days Paul made many in Jerusalem tremble: and now the very thought of Jerusalem fills him with fear. How well-grounded was his fear, we learn from Acts xxi. 27—36. **My ministry**: further described in *v.* 25. For the success of Paul's work, it was needful that the gift be **acceptable** not only (*v.* 16) to God but also **to the saints** at Jerusalem. He therefore bids his readers pray both that he may be **rescued from the disobedient ones in Judæa** and that the service he is rendering to **Jerusalem** may find favour in the eyes of the Christians there.

32. Further purpose of the prayers for which Pauls asks. **In joy**: seeing the success of my work. **Through** the **will of God**: cp. ch. i. 10. **With you be refreshed**: cp. ch. i. 12. Paul looks forward to rest in the bosom of the Roman Church after the conflict he foresees at Jerusalem, a rest resulting from the success

of his work there. The earnestness of this request reveals Paul's belief that prayer avails to rescue us even from bad men, and that therefore their violence is under God's control: cp. 2 Cor. i. 11; also Eph. vi. 19, Col. iv. 3.

33. Concluding prayer: cp. *v.* 13. **The God of peace:** so ch. xvi. 20, 1 Cor. xiv. 33, 2 Cor. xiii. 11, Ph. iv. 9, 1 Th. v. 23. In face of the storm ready to burst, Paul looks up to Him who dwells in perfect peace, and who gives peace to all who trust in Him.

Notice carefully the similarity in matter and phrase and tone of *vv.* 14—33 with ch. i. 8—15. These personal matters reveal to us, more than anything else in the epistle, the heart and feelings of Paul.

SECTION L

SALUTATIONS TO ROME

CH. XVI. 1—16

I recommend to you Phœbe our sister, she *being a deacon of the church in Cenchreæ;* [2] *that ye may receive her in* the *Lord, in a manner worthy of the saints, and may stand by her in whatever matter she may need you. For she also has been a protector of many, and of myself.*

[3] *Salute Prisca and Aquila, my fellow-workers in Christ Jesus,* [4] *who on behalf of my life laid down their own neck; to whom not only I give thanks but also all the churches of the Gentiles:* [5] *and* salute *the church in their house. Salute Epœnetus, my beloved, who is a firstfruit of Asia for Christ.* [6] *Salute Mary who laboured much for you.* [7] *Salute Andronicus and Junias, my kinsfolk and my fellow-prisoners, who are of note among the apostles, who were in Christ before me.* [8] *Salute Ampliatus, my beloved in* the *Lord.* [9] *Salute Urban, our fellow-worker in Christ, and Stachys, my beloved.* [10] *Salute Apelles, the proved one in Christ. Salute those from* the household *of Aristobulus.* [11] *Salute Herodion, my kinsman. Salute them from* the household *of Narcissus, who are in* the *Lord.* [12] *Salute Tryphœna and*

Tryphosa, who labour in the *Lord. Salute Persis the beloved, who laboured much in the Lord.* [13] *Salute Rufus, the chosen in* the *Lord, and his mother and mine.* [14] *Salute Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobus, Hermas, and the brethren with them.* [15] *Salute Philologus and Julia, Nereus and his sister, and Olympas and all the saints with them.* [16] *Salute one another with a holy kiss. All the churches of Christ salute you.*

1, 2. Phœbe: not mentioned elsewhere. These words suggest that she was the bearer of this epistle. **Deacon**: see under ch. xii. 7. She held an office in the church, probably to care for the bodily wants of the poor and sick. **Cenchreæ**: Acts xviii. 18: the eastern port of Corinth, five miles away. **In** the **Lord**: cp. Ph. ii. 29. Their inward union with their Master should prompt them to welcome Phœbe. **Worthy-of** *the saints*: same word in Eph. iv. 1, Ph. i. 27, Col. i. 10, 1 Th. ii. 12, 3 Jno. 6: as those who belong to God ought to receive a fellow-servant. **Saints**: as in ch. i. 7. **Protector of many**: probably by caring for their wants, in her office of *deacon*. That *Phœbe* was a *sister*, and still more an office-bearer, gave her a claim on the kindness of the Roman Christians: that she had herself been a helper of many, and of Paul himself, gave her a special claim: and she would probably need their assistance.

3—5*a*. Prisca: or *Priscilla*, Acts xviii. 2: named before her husband also in Acts xviii. 18, 26, 2 Tim. iv. 19. **Fellow-workers**: probably at Ephesus, where they were living a year ago: cp. 1 Cor. xvi. 19. This implies that they had only recently taken up their abode at Rome. Perhaps after Claudius died the edict which compelled them to leave Rome was no longer enforced. **Their own neck**: at the risk of the executioner's axe, they had saved Paul's **life**. This reminds us how much of his history is unknown to us. By saving Paul, they had earned the **thanks** of **all the churches of the Gentiles**. These words suggest that this service was known and acknowledged. **Church in their house**: so at Ephesus, 1 Cor. xvi. 19: cp. Col. iv. 15, Philem. 2. Probably it was their custom, wherever they lived, to gather together their fellow-Christians in their house for mutual edification. Notice that this small part of the Roman Church is called a *church*.

5*b*—16. Firstfruit: cp. ch. viii. 23. **Asia**: the Roman province: so Acts ii. 9, xvi. 6, Rev. i. 4, 11. **Laboured much for you**: understood by the readers, but not by us. **Junias**: a man, or

Junia a woman. **Kinsfolk**: *blood-relations:* so Mk. vi. 4, Acts x. 24. Paul would not state in this special and emphatic, yet ambiguous, way the mere fact that they were Jews: contrast ch. ix. 3. **Fellow-prisoners**: cp. Col. iv. 10, Philem. 23. **Among the apostles**: in the apostolic circle they were honourably known. It is utterly unsafe to infer from this easily-explained phrase that they were themselves apostles. **Before me**: consequently, while persecuting the Church, Paul had Christian relatives. **Our fellow-worker**: i.e. with Paul and his colleagues: cp. 2 Cor. ii. 14—17. **The proved-one**: his faith had been put to some special test. **Rufus**: possibly the same as in Mk. xv. 21. **And mine**: a recognition of special maternal kindness to himself. **The brethren with them**: implying some connection, local or in joint Christian enterprise, altogether unknown to us. Another company in *v.* 15. **Holy kiss**: 1 Cor. xvi. 20, 2 Cor. xiii. 12, 1 Th. v. 26, 1 Pet. v. 14. **All the churches**: to all whom he met, Paul said that he was writing to the Christians at Rome; and all sent greeting.

Of the above names, *Phœbe*, *Prisca*, *Mary*, *Tryphæna*, *Tryphosa*, *Persis*, are women: *Junias* or *Junia* and *Julias* or *Julia* are doubtful: the rest are men.

That Paul knew so many persons in a city he had never visited, need not surprise us: for all sorts of people went to live at Rome. Two-thirds of the names are Greek. And even Roman names might, as in the case of Paul, be names of Jews and Greeks. The case of Aquila suggests how some others may have become known to Paul.

SECTION LI

A WARNING AGAINST DIVISION

CH. XVI. 17—20

But I exhort you, brethren, to mark those who make the divisions and the snares contrary to the teaching which ye learnt. [18] *For such men do not serve the Lord Christ, but their own belly: and through their smooth talking and fine talking they deceive the hearts of the guileless.* [19] *For your obedience has reached to all*

men. *In you then I rejoice. But I desire you to be wise for* that which is *good, and pure for* that which is *evil.* [20] *And the God of peace will crush Satan under your feet quickly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ* be *with you.*

17—19. Divisions: so 1 Cor. iii. 3, Gal. v. 20. **Snares**: so ch. xiv. 13. They who set Christian against Christian are setting a trap into which both themselves and others are likely to fall. **Contrary to etc.**: explained in *v.* 18. Paul taught men to **serve Christ**: these men serve their lower appetites. Men *serve* **their own belly** when they make its gratification the aim of their life: cp. ch. vi. 12, Ph. iii. 19. Paul here uncovers the real source and tendency of all party spirit, viz. self-gratification; in this case, of a gross kind. **The guileless**: lacking, as the context implies, not only deceit but wisdom. That innocent men are their victims, increases the guilt of the deceivers. These men are a complete contrast to those in ch. xiv. 6 who, while eating food which some disapprove, eat it "for the Lord." **For your obedience** and **in you then**: in sharp contrast to the *guileless* who are led into disobedience. **Has reached to all**: as good tidings: cp. 1 Th. i. 8; Rom. i. 8.

20. From the authors of discord Paul turns to **the God of peace**: cp. ch. xv. 33. **Satan**: a Hebrew word denoting *adversary*: e.g. 1 Kgs. xi. 14, 23, 25, Num. xxii. 22, 32; and used in Job i. 6—12, Zech. iii. 1, 1 Chr. xxi. 1 for the great supernatural adversary of God and man: cp. Rev. xx. 2, 1 Cor. v. 5, etc. As hostile to the God of peace, he is an author of confusion. **Will crush** *Satan*: thus fulfilling the promise in Gen. iii. 15, which is in part fulfilled in each victory over evil. **Under your feet**: which God will make strong enough to crush Satan. **Quickly**: for in Christ the battle is already over. **The grace etc.**: may the favour of our Master be your companion.

That Paul refers to the divisions only for a moment at the end of his letter, suggests that this evil was not serious at Rome. That this reference is found in a letter written probably from Corinth where divisions were rife (1 Cor. i. 11, 2 Cor. xi. 11—15), is a mark of genuineness.

SECTION LII

SALUTATIONS FROM CORINTH: AND DOXOLOGY

CH. XVI. 21—27

Timothy my fellow-worker salutes you; and Lucius and Jason and Sosipater, my kinsmen. [22] *I, Tertius, who wrote the letter in* the *Lord, salute you.* [23] *Gaius, the host of me and of the whole church, salutes you. Erastus, the steward of the city, salutes you: and the brother Quartus.*

[25] *To Him that is able to establish you, according to my Gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to a revelation of a mystery kept in silence for eternal times* [26] *but manifested now, and made known, through prophetic writings, according to a command of the eternal God, for obedience of faith, for all the nations,* [27] *to the only wise God through Jesus Christ; to whom* be *the glory for the ages. Amen.*

Verse 20 seemed to be the end of the letter. But, after writing it, Paul either receives or remembers the greetings from Corinth to Rome which follow. He adds them as a postscript; and then concludes again with a doxology.

21—23. Timothy my fellow-worker: so Acts xvi. 3, xvii. 14, 15, xviii. 5. When Paul, after writing this letter, started from Corinth to Jerusalem, Timothy was with him: see Introd. iv. 4; Acts xx. 4. **Lucius:** same name in Acts xiii. 1. **Jason:** same name in Acts xvii. 5. Whether they were the same men, we cannot tell. **Sosipater:** possibly the same as *Sopater* in Acts xx. 4. **My kinsmen:** as in *v.* 7. In our total ignorance of Paul's family, we need not wonder that he had three relatives at Rome and three at Corinth. **Tertius, who wrote the letter,** inserts a greeting in his own name. The use of a secretary is also implied in 1 Cor. xvi. 21, 2 Th. iii. 17. But the peculiarity and close similarity of style suggest that we have dictated words of Paul. **Gaius:** perhaps the same as in 1 Cor. i. 14. If so, his name confirms our inference that this letter was written from Corinth. Same name in Acts xix. 29, xx. 4: it was very common. **Of the whole church:** either by finding room for its meetings, or by entertaining many of its members. **Erastus:** probably not the same as in Acts xix. 22.

The commonness of the name leaves us uncertain whether he was the same as in 2 Tim. iv. 20. **Steward:** in charge of the city finances. This mention of a Christian in an influential position confirms 1 Cor. i. 26, "not many mighty."

24. Certainly spurious. Of *vv.* 25—27, Origen says in his commentary, "In other copies, i.e. in those not desecrated by Marcion, we find this passage itself differently placed. For in some MSS., after the place we have mentioned above, viz. 'but all that is not of faith is sin,' joining on at once is read 'but to Him that is able to establish you.' But other MSS. have it at the end as now placed." These verses follow ch. xiv. 23 in one uncial and in many later copies. A few, including the Alex. MS., have it in both places; and a few in neither. But the authority of nearly all the oldest copies, of the oldest versions, and of Origen the earliest commentator, puts beyond doubt that the verses are genuine, and that their place in our Bible is the right one.

25. Paul put his usual farewell in *v.* 20; and now, instead of repeating it, concludes with a doxology: cp. 2 Pet. iii. 18, and especially Jude 24. In view of hostile influences around, he looks up **to Him that is able to establish,** i.e. to give immoveable firmness: same word in ch. i. 11, 2 Th. ii. 17, iii. 3. **According to my Gospel:** same words in ch. ii. 16: an unshaken position in harmony with the tidings of salvation. **Proclamation:** as in ch. ii. 21: same word in 1 Cor. i. 21, ii. 4, xv. 14, 2 Tim. iv. 17, Tit. i. 3. The good news is also an announcement made by Christ as *herald:* cognate word in chs. ii. 21, x. 8, 14, 15. **Revelation:** as in ch. i. 17. **Mystery:** as in ch. xi. 25. **Eternal,** or *age-lasting:* cognate to *ages* in *v.* 27, and *age* in ch. xii. 2. *Eternal times:* same words in 2 Tim. i. 9, Tit. i. 2. Since the plural **times** cannot denote the uncreated pre-existence of God, this term can only denote the long ages before the appearance of Christ, during which the salvation afterwards announced in the Gospel for all that believe was **kept in silence.** But even then it was "promised:" Tit. i. 2. A similar use of the word *eternal* for a long period of past time is found (LXX.) in Pss. xxiv. 7, 9, lxxvii. 5, Isa. lviii. 12, lxi. 4. In the Gospel God reveals, by a proclamation brought by Christ, a purpose kept in silence during long ages and unknown now except to those to whom the Spirit of God reveals it, viz. that without respect of nationality God saves all who believe: a close parallel in Eph. iii. 2—11.

26. Manifested: as in ch. i. 19: set publicly before men, viz. by the coming and preaching of Christ. **Now:** in Paul's own day.

By means of prophetic writings: viz. the Jewish Scriptures: cp. chs. i. 2, iii. 22. The apostles proved that Jesus is the Christ, and thus **made known** the *mystery* of salvation, by showing that in Him were fulfilled the O.T. descriptions of the Messiah. So Acts xviii. 28, 2 Tim. iii. 15. Thus the O.T. held a place in their teaching it cannot have with us who received O.T. and N.T. at the same time and with like authority. **According to a command of God**: so 1 Tim. i. 1, Tit. i. 3. The Gospel was preached to the Gentiles at the bidding of God. **Eternal** or *age-lasting God:* reigning throughout the *age-lasting times*. The use of the same adjective in the same sentence for limited and for unlimited duration, need not surprise us. In each case, it denotes long duration: and this is the meaning of the word. That God has neither beginning nor end, and that the long ages of silence had both, the readers knew so well that express distinction was needless. **For obedience of faith**: as in ch. i. 5: purpose of the *command* to preach the Gospel. **For all the nations**: persons embraced in this purpose: cp. ch. i. 5.

27. God alone wise: cp. 1 Tim. i. 17, "alone God;" ch. vi. 16 "alone has immortality." The Father, even as compared with the Son, is, as the fount of deity, the one ultimate source of wisdom and possessor of immortal life: cp. ch. xi. 33. **Through Jesus Christ**: as the channel through which the Father manifests Himself and accomplishes His purposes. At this point the sentence is broken off, and concludes with a relative clause: **to whom** be **etc. The glory for the ages**, or *for ever:* as in ch. xi. 36. It is quite uncertain whether or not Paul added *of the ages*, as in Gal. i. 5, Ph. iv. 20, 1 Tim. i. 17, 2 Tim. iv. 18.

A close parallel in Jude 24, 25: "To Him who is able to guard you from stumbling, and to set you in the presence of His glory without blemish, in gladness, to Him who is alone God our Saviour through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, greatness, might, and authority, before all the age and now and for all the ages. Amen."

Paul turns from the perils around to Him whose power is able to preserve the Roman Christians unmoved amid all. He is encouraged by remembering that what he desires for them is but a realisation of that which Christ was sent forth from God to proclaim, an accomplishment of a purpose which, after lying hidden for long ages in the mind of God, had in their days been revealed. He remembers that to prepare the way for the Gospel the prophets had written, that the Gospel was preached by the command of God,

in order to lead all men to obey God. A contemplation of this eternal purpose, and of the means by which God is slowly but surely advancing to its accomplishment, calls forth praise to the all-wise God. But Paul cannot ascribe praise to the Father without speaking of Him through whom alone the light of the Father's wisdom has fallen on our race. And, while he praises the might and wisdom of God, he knows, with heart-felt approbation, that the song of praise will go up for ever.

Thus this glorious epistle leaves us gazing into the endless succession of coming ages and listening to the song which throughout each successive age will rise with louder and sweeter note to Him who, before the ages were, formed for us, whom He foresaw in sin and ruin, His wondrous and costly purpose of salvation and life, who throughout the successive ages of the earlier covenants carried His purpose towards and to its historic completion in Jesus of Nazareth, and who now day by day carries forward the same purpose by His Spirit in the hearts of us His children until that day when we and Paul and the whole family of earth and heaven shall join in that anthem of praise whose notes from afar, as the weary pen of the apostle falls from his hand, are already ringing in his ears.

DOCTRINAL RESULTS

DISSERTATION I

PAUL'S VIEW OF THE GOSPEL AND OF CHRIST

1. In Introd. iii., we found proof that the Epistle to the Romans as we have it in Greek and English is a copy or translation, correct within certain specified limits, of a letter actually written by Paul. Therefore, while studying it, we have been in the presence, and have listened to the voice, of an apostle. We shall now consider his claims to our confidence, and the practical worth of his testimony touching the teaching and the dignity of Christ.

2. We notice Paul's wide range of thought, and his careful observation of men and things. He sees in the material universe a revelation of God to all men; and in the inborn moral sense of the Gentiles he finds a divine law by which they will be judged: chs. i. 19, 20; ii. 14, 15. In the groans of the lower creatures, he hears an unconscious prophecy of coming deliverance: ch. viii. 19—22. The folly and shame of the heathen are to him a proof of God's anger against them: ch. i. 21—32. Yet he is prepared to admit excellence among them acceptable to God: ch. ii. 26, 27. He has considered the claims of the rulers of the State, and the origin of their authority: ch. xiii. 1—7. All this betrays, not merely a man born and for many years living among Gentiles, but one who has not thought it beneath him to make them an object of study.

We notice also his complete freedom from Jewish, and from Anti-Jewish, prejudice. He gives the Gentiles credit for occasional morality, and shows that in many cases the greater knowledge of the Jews did but increase their guilt: ch. ii. 17—29. He recognises the great advantages of Israel, but declares that the Gentiles are

without excuse: chs. iii. 1, ix. 4, 5, i. 20. We observe the impartiality with which he looks at both sides of a question, and gives to each man his due; e.g. his words in ch. xiv. to the weak and to the strong. And we notice his readiness, while claiming apostolic authority, to reason out the matters brought before his readers. Even his outbursts of exultation take the form of argument.

We are strongly impressed, not only with Paul's fairness and intellectual power, but with his moral worth and his intense earnestness. Everything in the epistle bears the stamp of reality. The writer is evidently a good man; and believes, and is deeply moved by, all he says. It is equally certain that he has had abundant means of information: for he has been a colleague both of the murderers, and of the chosen disciples, of Christ. In the noonday of life, as we learn from 1 Cor. xv. 9, Gal. i. 13, Ph. iii. 5, 1 Tim. i. 13, he found reason for leaving the former and joining the latter.

We have therefore in Paul a witness who has had ample opportunities of knowing that about which he writes, a man of keen observation and impartial judgment, and of undoubted honesty. What does he say about the teaching and the claims of Jesus?

3. On p. 250 we saw that the whole epistle is an assertion, defence, and development of five great doctrines, viz. Justification through Faith, and through the Death of the Son of God, Sanctification in Christ, through Faith, and in the Holy Spirit. Of these doctrines, the first is the most prominent. It is formally asserted in ch. i. 16, 17, at the beginning of the epistle; is supported in chs. i. 18—iii. 20 by proof that apart from the Gospel all men are exposed to punishment; is reasserted in ch. iii. 21, 22; and is supplemented in ch. iii. 24—26 and in chs. vi.—viii. by the doctrines of Justification through Christ's Death and Sanctification in Christ, which harmonize Justification through Faith with the justice and the holiness of God. Of this primal doctrine, Sanctification through Faith is a development. Sanctification in the Spirit is made needful by man's felt inward bondage to sin. In chs. ix.—xi., the primal doctrine and its consequences are shown to be in harmony with the earlier revelations to Abraham and through Moses to Israel. The chapters following are an application of the above doctrines to sundry

matters in practical life. Thus the whole epistle is a development, in view of the character of God and the facts of human nature, of one great fundamental doctrine. This doctrine, thus developed, is the Gospel of Paul ; the good news he everywhere announced, and for which he claimed the belief of all men.

4. No one who reads this epistle can doubt for a moment that Paul himself fully believed these great doctrines. And it is evident that they aroused the deepest emotions of his heart, and were the directive principle of his life. This is proved by the bright and peaceful hope and the exultant joy which gild these pages, a joy undimmed by the hardship and peril (see chs. viii. 35, 36, xv. 31, 32) which have left their mark on this epistle. For, evidently, Paul's belief of these doctrines was the ground of all his hope and the source of all his joy. Of the sincerity of his belief, he gave proof by passing, in the midst of a public career, from the ranks of the persecutors to those of the persecuted.

5. We now ask, How came Paul to believe these doctrines, and on what grounds did his belief rest? Since the Gospel proclaims pardon from God, nothing less than a revelation from God is sufficient ground for belief of it. And we have not in this case a universal revelation like that which makes known to every man the eternal principles of right and wrong. John the Baptist needed no proof (cp. Jno. x. 41) for his moral teaching : because he did but re-echo a voice of authority which speaks in every heart. But the Gospel rather contradicts than re-echoes the voice within. For it proclaims life for men whose conscience condemns them as worthy to die. Therefore no intelligent man will believe the good news of life unless it be supported by an authority equal to that which has already proclaimed his condemnation.

We have seen that Paul accepts these doctrines with perfect confidence, but gives no proof of them. That such a man accepted such doctrines, is a well-attested mental fact which requires explanation. We ask again, On what grounds did he accept them?

6. Paul teaches frequently that Christ is the personal object

of saving faith: e.g. Rom. iii. 22, Gal. ii. 16, 20. This implies that the glad tidings of salvation came through His lips and were accepted by Paul on His authority. This is also expressly asserted in Gal. i. 11, 12. And it is the only explanation, and a complete explanation, of the serene confidence with which in this epistle Paul asserts without proof the doctrines of the Gospel. Consequently, the intensity of his conviction that these doctrines are divinely-revealed truth is a measure of his confidence that they were actually taught by Jesus. This evidence is confirmed, and the proof thereby afforded raised to absolute certainty, by the fact that these doctrines or doctrines equivalent are taught more or less definitely, and are directly attributed to Christ, by other N.T. writers: see pages 113, 119. Therefore, whatever we may think of the teaching and the claims of Christ, we are compelled to admit as historic fact that the above doctrines, assumed with complete confidence by Paul, were actually taught by Jesus of Nazareth.

7. We now ask, How came Paul to accept the simple authority of Jesus as sufficient proof of the truth of these important doctrines? To answer this question, I shall endeavour to reproduce Paul's conception of Jesus.

Throughout the epistle, Paul betrays perfect confidence that Jesus of Nazareth is the promised Messiah, by using the word *Christ* as His proper name.

Jesus Christ is, in Paul's view, the channel of blessing from God to man, blessing designed for all and actually received by many: ch. v. 15—19. Through Christ, Paul was reconciled to God, made an object of His favour, and called to be an apostle: ch. i. 5, v. 1, 11. Through Christ, he now exults in God and will hereafter reign in life: ch. v. 11, 17. He bids his readers reckon themselves to be, in Christ, dead to sin and living for God; and in Him he has been made free from the power of sin: chs. vi. 11, viii. 2. Hence it is in or through Christ that God manifests His infinite wisdom and love; and through Christ Paul's praises go up to God: chs. xvi. 27, viii. 39; i. 8, vii. 25. Through Christ, God will judge the world: ch. ii. 16. Justification is attributed specially to the death of Christ: chs. iii. 25, v. 9, 10. The mention of

"blood" implies a violent death; and ch. vi. 6 reminds us that the violence took the form of crucifixion. To this death Christ submitted deliberately, by the will of God, for our good and to make us servants of Christ: chs. iii. 25, v. 6—8, xiv. 9, 15. The need for so costly a means of salvation lay in our sins; looked at in the light of the justice of God: chs. iv. 25; iii. 26.

The above teaching implies that Christ's relation to God differs in kind from ours, and therefore puts Him infinitely above us. That Christ's death saves us from the consequences of our sins, implies that, while all others have sinned, He is sinless. This is confirmed by ch. viii. 3, "in the likeness of the flesh of sin." Again, that the death of one man made it consistent with the justice of God to offer salvation to all men, implies that in essential worth the one Man surpassed the entire race. The difference between Christ and ourselves is further seen in the frequently-recurring words *in Christ*. Speaking of a man of flesh and blood who lived in his own day, and is now dead and gone, Paul declares Him to be the vital element in which His servants are, and live, and exult, and speak, and write, and work: chs. xvi. 7, 11; vi. 11; xv. 17; ix. 1; xvi. 22, 3, 12. The Spirit of God is the Spirit of Christ; and the presence of the Spirit of God is the life-giving presence within us of Christ Himself: ch. viii. 9, 10. Absent in body, Christ is still the Master whom we obey and before whom we stand: chs. xiv. 8, xvi. 18.

Having learnt that Jesus is infinitely above us, we are not surprised to find Him placed by Paul infinitely near to God. That one man died to save a race of men, is said in ch. v. 6—8 to be a wonderful proof of God's love to the race. This implies that the one Man stands infinitely nearer to God than does the race He came to save.

We notice that five times Christ is called, in distinction from others, and as a mark of great and peculiar dignity, *the Son of God*, and twice more by the still more definite term *His own Son;* and that this relation to God is appealed to as proof of God's love to us and of the earnestness of His purpose to bless us: see chs. i. 3, 4, v. 10, viii. 3, 29, 32. This implies that Jesus is the Son of God in a sense which marks Him off from us as holding a nearer relation

to God which raises Him infinitely above us, and made Him an appropriate channel of unique and infinite blessing from God to all men.

The word *Son* suggests the idea of origin. Consequently the term *Son of God* suggests that this infinite difference lies in a different mode of derivation from the common Father of Him and of us.

Again, the unique position held by Christ in this epistle, and His unique relation to God arising from His unique mode of derivation from Him, suggest at once and irresistibly that the title *Son of God* marks Him off not only from us sinners but from the loftiest of the creatures of God. That God sent His own Son into the world, implies His pre-existence as, though not yet incarnate, holding a unique relation to God as derived from Him. The only explanation of this difference is that, whereas all they were created, He is without beginning, the eternal Son of God.

The word *Son* implies not only derivation but subordination. And throughout this epistle we find absolute subordination of the Son to the Father. The word *God* designates the Father, even in distinction from Christ: ch. v. 8, 11, etc. It is by the Father, and to accomplish His purpose, that Jesus was "set forth in His blood:" ch. iii. 25. It is to the Father that we are reconciled through the Son: ch. v. 1, 10. He it is that raised Christ, and to Him Paul's songs of praise go up: chs. iv. 24, vi. 4, x. 9; xi. 33—36, xvi. 25—27. In all these places the Father is described by the simple term *God*.

Similar teaching is abundant in all the epistles bearing the name of Paul. See especially Col. i. 15—18, where he speaks of "the Son of His love" as "Firstborn before every creature," because "in Him" and "through Him and for Him were created" the various and shining ranks of the celestial hierarchy. All this leaves no room to doubt that across the infinite gulf which separates the Creator from even the noblest and earliest of His creatures, and infinitely near and dear to the Father, Paul's faith beheld his Master, Christ.

The title *Son of God* is given to Christ as a mark of special dignity in Jno. i. 34, 50, v. 25, xi. 4, xix. 7, xx. 31; 1 Jno. i. 3, 7,

iii. 8, 23, iv. 10, 15, v. 5, 9, 10, 11, 13, 20. That it denotes a unique relation to God, is made conspicuous in the title *Only-begotten* Son, in Jno. iii. 16, 18, 1 Jno. iv. 9. The Son declares that He does whatever the Father does, has whatever the Father has, and is one with the Father: Jno. v. 19, xvi. 15, x. 30. The Jews understood that by so speaking He was claiming to be equal to God. Yet the writer, careful at other times (cp. chs. ii. 21, xxi. 23) to guard his Master's words from misinterpretation, does not say that in this case they were misunderstood. In ch. i. 1—3, we read that the Word was in the beginning with God, and was God, and that through Him all things were made: and *v.* 14 leaves no room to doubt that the Word became incarnate as Jesus. In ch. xx. 28, He is represented as accepting from Thomas the august title "my Lord and my *God*."

That the being of the Son is derived from the Father, is plainly taught in Jno. v. 26: "Just as the Father has life in Himself, so also to the Son has He given to have life in Himself." So ch. vi. 57: "I live because of the Father." From chs. v. 19, 30, xiv. 28, we learn that this derivation involves subordination: "the Son can do nothing from Himself, nothing except what He sees the Father doing;" as He hears He judges, seeking not his own will but the will of Him that sent Him; "My Father is greater than I." All this by no means implies inferiority or later origin; but only that the Son is an infinite Outflow of an infinite Source, and His whole life a life of devotion to the Father.

The superiority of the Son even to the brightest in heaven is very conspicuous in Rev. i. 5, 6, v. 6—14: contrast chs. xix. 10, xxii. 9, where an angel refuses worship and bids John to "worship God."

The title *Son of God* is given to Christ as one of great and unique dignity in Mt. iii. 17, iv. 3, xiv. 33, xvi. 16; Mk. i. 11, iii. 11, v. 7, ix. 7, xii. 6, xiv. 61; Lk. i. 32, iii. 22, iv. 3, viii. 28, ix. 35, x. 22; Acts ix. 20; Heb. i. 2—8, iv. 14, v. 5, 8, vi. 6, vii. 3, 28, x. 29; Rev. ii. 18. In Mt. vii. 23, xiii. 41, xvi. 27, xxv. 31; Acts x. 42, xvii. 31, we are taught that Christ will judge the world.

The above quotations prove that Paul's conception of Christ was shared by the various writers of the New Testament, i.e. by all His early followers whose opinions have come down to us.

This whole subject I have discussed at length on pp. 215—300 of my volume entitled *Through Christ to God.*

To resume our argument. We have seen that Paul accepted, in the noonday of life, the great fundamental doctrines of this epistle; and that they took hold of his mind and heart so firmly that they carried him with a song of triumph through a life of hardship and peril. We saw that Paul's belief of these doctrines rested entirely on the authority of Jesus. And we sought to know something of the Teacher whose word was sufficient to inspire a man like Paul with confidence so complete. Paul's firm belief of the Gospel is now explained by his equally firm belief that Jesus is the Son of God.

8. This explanation, however, sufficient as it is for the point in question, by no means satisfies us: for it has brought us face to face with a far more wonderful mental fact which also demands explanation. How came it that Jesus stamped on the mind of Paul the profound impression which we have just traced as reflected on the pages of this epistle? We have before us a man of the highest mental power and moral worth, a man of the class least prone to hero-worship. Yet before Jesus of Nazareth, a fellow-countryman who in his own day and his own city had died in the prime of life, he bows down with humble submission as to One the latchet of whose shoe he is not worthy to stoop down and unloose. This absolute submission to Jesus made itself felt while we were but on the threshold of the epistle, and it breathes in every page. There is no trace of familiarity, or of that equality of manhood which no human distinctions can altogether efface. But there is everywhere a consciousness of the honour of being a servant of a Master so illustrious. In 2 Cor. ii. 14, Paul counts it an honour to be led as a captive in the triumphal procession of so mighty and benign a conqueror.

For this profound submission, I seek an explanation. Who was Jesus? how came He to obtain such ascendency over such a man? Certainly Christ did something infinitely greater than anything Paul could do; and thus compelled him to bow as in the presence of One infinitely greater than himself.

Our wonder is increased by the fact that Jesus and Paul never

met on earth. Only by hearsay did Paul know Jesus. Consequently the influence of Jesus over Paul cannot be attributed to the divine purity and beauty of the life of Jesus. For an impression thus produced could not, by words, be conveyed in force sufficient to produce the effects we see in Paul. The question returns, What had Jesus done, surpassing utterly all that Paul could do, to lead captive, in complete and willing submission, the author of this wonderful epistle? The devotion of Paul to Jesus is an historic fact resting on evidence most conclusive which demands explanation. It is a known effect; and implies a sufficient cause.

9. Paul himself gives the explanation and points to the cause. He began his letter by saying that Jesus was marked out as Son of God by resurrection of the dead. His resurrection is the ground and matter of saving faith: chs. iv. 24, 25, x. 9. Our new life is a union with the life of the Risen One, and is therefore a result of His resurrection: ch. vi. 4, 9—11, vii. 4, xiv. 9. That He rose, is a pledge that none can tear us from His arms, and that our own dead body will rise: ch. viii. 34, 11. In 1 Cor. xv. 13—21, the faith and hope of Paul and his companions are made to rest on the historic fact of the resurrection of Christ: and in all his epistles it occupies a chief place.

All this proves, not only that Paul fully believed that Jesus rose, but that this belief exerted a great influence on his inward and outward life. It is easy to believe with confidence, even upon slight evidence, a matter of no moment to us. But the mind of an intelligent man will not be at rest in a matter vital to him unless he have what his judgment pronounces to be sufficient proof. To Paul, everything hung upon the fact of Christ's resurrection: for this was the ground of his confidence in Jesus and of his belief of the Gospel. Consequently, his absolute devotion to Christ, the perfect peace which reigns over the entire epistle, and the glowing exultation which irradiates every page attest that he had what he thought to be sufficient evidence that Jesus rose from the dead.

The absence of any attempt to prove that Christ rose implies that Paul's confidence was shared by the men around him. Writing

to Christians at a distance whom he has never seen, he takes for granted this great article of the Christian faith. We have thus in this epistle an indirect proof of the unanimity of the disciples of Jesus that their Master rose from the dead. And this proof is confirmed by the confidence with which the various N.T. writers speak of the resurrection of Christ as undoubted fact.

Paul's profound submission to Jesus is now explained. If he believed that He whom the thousands of Jerusalem saw dead upon the cross had come back in triumph from the grave, that He had trampled under foot the tremendous conqueror before whose approach the mightiest on earth tremble and bow, we wonder not that in His presence Paul bowed with humble reverence as before One far greater than man. And, if he believed that Jesus came back from the grave in order that through its shattered portal there might shine upon His murderers and upon the world the smile of a pardoning God, we wonder not that his profound submission was raised to rapturous devotion. It may be that in this belief we are unable to share. It may be that we look on the apostle as a dupe and a fanatic. But indisputably we have in this belief an explanation, the only conceivable explanation, of Paul's supreme and undeniable devotion to Jesus.

10. We have now before us three mental, but in a correct sense historic, facts; viz. Paul's belief that the Gospel is true, his belief that Jesus is the Son of God, and his belief that Jesus rose from the dead. Each of these beliefs rests, as a mental fact, on unquestionable historic evidence. The first is accounted for by the second; the second, by the third; and the third, bearing the weight of the first and second, now demands explanation. Only two suppositions are possible. If Jesus actually rose, the fact of His resurrection will abundantly account for Paul's confident belief that He rose. In this case, we can easily conceive that, even while persecuting the Church, the evidence for the resurrection of Jesus pressed with increasing weight upon his mind; that his contact with Christians, hostile though it was, furnished additional evidence day by day; that he was unable, even by reckless loyalty to Judaism, to shake off the growing conviction which the evidence produced; and that the appearance of the Risen One on the way to Damascus broke

down at last every barrier which prejudice and interest had erected, and brought him in humble penitence to the feet of Jesus. It may be objected that this explanation is impossible, that it involves an interruption of the unvarying action of natural forces, and thus disturbs an assumption underlying all human thought. But the resurrection of Jesus does not imply any such suspension of natural forces: it implies only that, just as in living bodies certain chemical forces are constantly neutralised by the presence of animal life, so in the dead body of Jesus a higher Power neutralised natural forces which reduce other dead bodies to dust, and that thus what in others would have been a final separation of body and soul was in Him but a transient sleep.

If we reject this supposition, we are compelled to believe that a man whose last words were spoken in agony from a cross produced with or without design, in the minds of thousands of Jews a full conviction that He had trampled death under foot and risen in triumph to the skies; and that He produced this conviction in the mind of a friend of His murderers, a citizen of Jerusalem, a man of accurate observation and calm judgment. Nay more. So thorough was the conviction thus produced that it became the mainspring of a life of unwearied toil and beneficence. For indisputably Paul's belief that Christ rose from the dead was the ground of the confidence which moved him to preach the Gospel. The results of his preaching and of that of others who shared his belief are before us to-day. All the effects which Christ and Christianity have produced in the world have been brought about by men who believed that He rose from the dead, and who, but for this belief, would have achieved nothing. But no one can deny that Christianity, in spite of the corruptions with which it has been soiled and therefore weakened by contact with a corrupt world, nevertheless saved the world from the utter dissolution into which in Paul's day society was sinking. Consequently, if we deny the resurrection of Christ, we are compelled to believe that a delusion has saved the world. Mark now the alternative. We must believe either that there was present in the human body of Jesus a life mightier than the life which lives in us, and that this mightier life rescued His body from the corruption to which all other bodies succumb, or

that the eternal law which compels us to believe that to know the truth is for man's highest good has been, not merely suspended, but for centuries set aside, and that a delusion has saved the world. Renan says that the passionate love of a demented woman (Mary of Magdala) gave to the world a resuscitated God. He might have said that she gave to the world a resuscitated humanity.

The above argument is further developed on pp. 301—359 of my *Through Christ to God.*

11. If we accept the historic fact that Jesus rose from the dead, we shall not hesitate to acknowledge that He is the Son of God: for none can deny that He claimed to be such. If we acknowledge His claim, we shall believe with perfect and well-grounded confidence the great doctrines of this epistle: for indisputably they came from His lips. And, if we accept these doctrines, Paul's argument will compel us to accept the teaching of the whole epistle: for the whole is a logical development of these great doctrines. Thus, as asserted in 1 Cor. xv. 17, the Christian hope rests on the historic fact of the resurrection of Christ. In our defence of this hope, we pass by other miracles and take up an impregnable position by our Master's empty grave.

12. Such is the historic evidence for the great doctrines assumed in this epistle. But it is not the whole evidence. Indeed, our verdict on its sufficiency will probably be determined by other evidence found in our own hearts and lives. This we may call the subjective, the former the objective, evidence for the Gospel. It is true that the good news of salvation is not, like the name of God, written on the open page of the material universe, nor, like the Law, on the inner tables of man's heart. Its manifestation was reserved for the coming of Christ. But it nevertheless receives confirmation from both these sources. For it reconciles God's goodness towards mankind as revealed (Acts xiv. 17) in Nature with His anger against sinners as revealed in the Law.

Do as we will, we cannot silence the voice of authority which speaks in our hearts and forbids us to be at rest while we continue in sin. Nor can we save ourselves from sin, or wipe out the condemnation written within. Of this universal consciousness of guilt and shame, the heathen world ancient and modern gives

abundant proof. Yet Nature tells us that God is good. But, left to ourselves, we cannot think of Him without fear. All this prepares us for a Gospel which proclaims salvation from the penalty and power of sin, by the free gift and the power of God. Moreover, so sacred do we feel the sequence of sin and suffering to be that we are not surprised to hear that the announcement of pardon, which seems to break this sequence, is accompanied by a proof, the most tremendous we can conceive, of the essential deadliness of sin. It is easier to believe the story of the cross than to believe that it was invented by man. And, when we have found by experience that we cannot be saved from sin except by a moral power infinitely greater than our own moral strength, we are prepared to hear that this mightier power has taken historic form in the resurrection of Jesus. But, if we have never felt our need of a saviour greater than ourselves, we shall accept any explanation, however absurd, rather than believe that God has put forth on our behalf a power altogether needless. In this case, however, the apostles' belief that Christ rose, and the results of their belief, will remain phenomena unparalleled in history, an enigma which no one can solve.

Many of my readers have still better inward proof. They have dared to believe these doctrines ; and have found, in proportion to their belief, an inward moral power carrying them onwards and upwards along the path marked out by the principles of morality written within. To them, not only has the Law been, by revealing their moral weakness and their danger, a guardian-slave (Gal. iii. 24) which has led them to Christ, but it each day affords, by marking out authoritatively the right path, an abiding proof of the divine origin of the Gospel which gives them moral strength to walk in the path thus marked out. They have thus, in a very real sense, put to the test the assertions of the Gospel, and have found them to be true. The evidence on which they at first believed the Gospel and accepted Christ as a Saviour from sin was rational, and sufficient for their need then. And the fuller evidence they have since received, evidence increasing day by day as each fresh trial reveals the sufficient grace and power of God, will enable them to approach the last

great foe, the dread conqueror of man but himself conquered by the Son of Man, without fear and with a shout of triumph and a song of praise to Him who has given them the victory.

DISSERTATION II

PAUL'S VIEW OF THE WAY OF SALVATION

Since the practical effect of the objective evidences for the Gospel depends on our own inner life, we will now reproduce in outline the picture of the Christian life given in this epistle.

1. MAN UNSAVED. Paul justifies the proclamation of pardon by saying that all men have sinned: ch. iii. 9, 19, 23. He singles out a man and tells him that he not only has sinned but is still sinning, and that by judging others he condemns himself: ch. ii. 1. Sin is a burden under which all lie, and from which none can save himself by future obedience: ch. iii. 9, 20. Consequently the whole world stands before God without excuse, and condemned: *v.* 19. Paul and his readers were themselves formerly sinners, and enemies needing to be reconciled to God: ch. v. 8—11. What he says of them must, in his view, be true of all mankind.

Again, sin is not only an act committed but a hostile power to which sinners are given up by God: ch. i. 24, 26, 28. It is a master to whose service they once devoted their powers to do what the Law forbids: ch. vi. 17, 19. This now covers them with shame: *v.* 21. While committing sin, they knew and approved the right; but the master they served was a power dwelling within them and forcing them to do what their better self detested: ch. vii. 18—23. In their own bodies sin had set up its throne; and so complete was its sway that the appetites of the body controlled their thought,

and led them along a path leading to destruction: chs. vi. 12, viii. 5, 6, vi. 21, 23. From this fatal bondage, they could not save themselves: ch. vii. 24. All this was, in Paul's view, consistent with occasional and praiseworthy obedience: ch. ii. 26, 27.

2. THE LAW. As a means of leading men to take the first steps in the way of salvation, God gave the Law. The Jews read it in the Old Testament; the Gentiles read it as written in their own hearts: ch. ii. 14, 15. But the Law only revealed the tremendous and universal power of sin: ch. iii. 20. It was given in order to reveal to all men the punishment which God will inflict on all sinners, and to which therefore all men are exposed: ch. iii. 19. God thus exerts on all men an influence leading them towards repentance: ch. ii. 4. The Law gives to the inborn principle of sin a living power, and thus becomes an instrument by which sin brings us under condemnation to death: ch. vii. 11. For this end, it was given: chs. v. 20, vii. 13. It commends itself to that which is noblest within us, and thus evokes efforts after obedience; but the repeated failure of these efforts reveals the awful truth that we are powerless to obey, that we are in the grasp of an enemy who is also an enemy of God and who dwells in our own bodies: ch. vii. 22, 23. The Law thus extorts a cry for deliverance: *v.* 24. When it has done this, it has attained its purpose. Henceforth salvation, in its successive steps, will be a realisation, not only of God's purpose of mercy, but of man's eager and intelligent desire.

3. JUSTIFICATION. To men thus repentant, God speaks again. He proclaims in the Gospel that He accepts as righteous all who believe: ch. iii. 22. He thus reveals, to men who cannot obtain righteousness by their own effort, a righteousness which is His gift. This gift of righteousness is practically pardon. To make it consistent with His own justice, God gave Christ to die: *v.* 26. And, as a proof of the divine authority of the proclamation and as a rational ground for the faith which He requires, God raised Him from the dead: ch. iv. 24, 25.

Paul assumes that his readers have already a secure place in the favour of God, are already justified and reconciled: ch. v. 2, 9—11. That they exult in hope of the glory of God, implies that they are conscious of forgiveness. And this consciousness is involved

in the nature of faith. Paul proves by argument, in *vv.* 5—11, that this hope rests on a solid foundation.

4. Paul assumes that his readers have the indwelling presence of THE HOLY SPIRIT: chs. v. 5, viii. 9—16. The absence of the Spirit would be a proof that they do not belong to Christ: ch. viii. 9. Hence we infer that the Spirit was given to them together with justification, when they believed and were baptized: cp. Gal. iii. 14, Acts ii. 38. He proves Himself to be the Spirit of God, by enabling them to fulfil the Law and to conquer sin: ch. viii. 4, 13. He reveals to them, by means of the historic fact of the death of Christ, God's infinite love, the sure ground of their hope of final salvation: ch. v. 5—10. He calls forth within them, by this revelation of God's fatherly love, the confidence of sons, and calls forth from that in them which is most akin to Himself, their own spirit, the cry *Father*. They know that this is no earth-born cry, but the voice of God's Spirit in them; and they therefore accept it as a divine testimony that they are God's sons and heirs of life eternal: ch. viii. 16, 17.

5. HOLINESS. We pass now from blessings which Paul everywhere assumes that his readers possess to others which he urges them at once to claim. He recalls their baptism, the outward and visible gate through which they entered the Christian life, and the form in which the rite was administered. It was the funeral service of their old life: in it they were formally and publicly laid in the grave of Christ: ch. vi. 4. This implies that God designs them to be dead and risen with Christ, i.e. to be sharers with Him of the results of His own death and sharers of His resurrection life. Now by His death Christ escaped from the curse of our sin: and His life is one absolutely devoted to God. God's purpose is that His servants, by inward contact with Christ, be made free from sin and live a life of unreserved consecration to God. Since Christ's burial and their own baptism are past, Paul speaks of their former life as already ended and themselves as buried in Christ's grave. But he finds it needful to urge them to appropriate, by the reckoning of faith, this full salvation: ch. vi. 11. In urging this, he uses sacrificial language, in chs. vi. 13, xii. 1; and in ch. xiii. 14, represents Christ as a holy garment to be put on. All this implies

that not all the justified are actually dead to sin and living only for God: and the exhortation to appropriate by faith the new life implies that it is a work and gift of God. Thus is realised in us, by the agency (ch. xv. 16) of the Holy Spirit, that subjective holiness (ch. i. 4) which is a conspicuous feature of the Son of God, the normal relation (ch. xi. 36) of the creature to the Creator, and the due complement of (ch. i. 7) the objective holiness conferred by the Gospel call on all who obey it.

6. PROGRESS. The above initial blessings must be followed by growth in Christ: but of this Paul has little to say. Day by day our mind is being restored to the original clearness lost (ch. i. 21) by sin; and thus day by day our entire character is changed in a direction opposite to that of the world around: ch. xii. 2. This renewal gives to us increasing power to distinguish what is, from what is not, pleasing to God. To aid this growth in spiritual intelligence, Paul wrote DIV. V. of this epistle.

Since unreserved devotion to God implies constant victory over sin, and since the force of habit is weakened by contrary action, our life is a gradual and progressive destruction of the surviving power of our past actions: for these, though daily overcome, are still a power against which we have to contend: ch. viii. 13. By spiritual growth, this opposing power is daily weakened.

7. OUR ENVIRONMENT. Though already sons and heirs of God, and rejoicing in hope of the coming glory, we are surrounded by hostile influences. But this need not surprise us: for our present state is one of hope, and hope implies absence of the good things hoped for: ch. viii. 24. Our adversaries cannot make us afraid: for, before they existed and before the world was, we were predestined by God to be sharers of the glory of His Son: *v.* 29. From this we infer that our afflictions are permitted only in order that they may work out for us God's eternal purpose of mercy: *v.* 28. We find it to be so. Our afflictions afford proof of the faithfulness of God, who daily delivers us, and thus confirm our hope: ch. v. 3, 4. The contrast between our circumstances and the aspirations put within us by the Spirit assures us that our present position is but for a time: and this assurance is confirmed by the state of Nature around us: ch. viii. 19—27. God has given

us, by the death of His Son, abundant proof that He is on our side; and, if so, nothing can harm us: *vv.* 31—39.

8. THE CHURCH. Throughout the exposition of the Gospel we have no mention of the Church or of church-officers. Paul deals only with the individual believer, in his relation to God, to Christ, and to the Spirit of God. This suggests irresistibly that the salvation announced by Christ is not conditioned by any order of men or visible organization as its sole channel. In this respect this epistle presents a marked contrast to Ex. xxviii. and xxix., where an order of priests is a conspicious feature of the new order of religious worship.

We have however been more than once reminded that we stand within the precincts of the Church. Paul assumes that his readers have been baptized, and speaks of confession with the mouth as a condition of salvation: chs. vi. 4, x. 9, 10. This implies that saving faith is accompanied by outward confession. Believers are twigs of an olive tree, drawing nourishment from its root: ch. xi. 17—24. They are compared to a living body consisting of various and variously-endowed members animated and bound together by one life-giving Spirit, each helping and needing the others. Our brotherhood in the Gospel binds us to consider, not merely our own welfare, but that of others, even at the cost of self-denial: chs. xiv. 19—xv. 2. The strong may strengthen and encourage others, and the reckless may injure and destroy others: chs. i. 11, 12, xiv. 15.

Phœbe was apparently an officer of the church in Cenchreæ: ch. xvi. 1. We read in *vv.* 5, 16 of the churches of the Gentiles and of Christ. There was a church in the house of Aquila: and Gaius was host "of the whole church." All this reveals communities more or less organized.

9. THE CIVIL POWER. That the Roman Christians were members of the Church, does not lessen, but sanctifies, their obligation as citizens of the State. Civil Government is a divine institution: and earthly rulers are men to whom, for our good, God has given authority to punish and reward. Consequently, obedience to them is, to us, a matter of conscience.

10. THE FUTURE. As Paul stands by the empty grave of

Christ, he looks forward with confidence to the rescue of his own body from the hand of death: ch. viii. 11, 23. Already a son of God, he looks forward to a share of the inheritance and the glory of the Firstborn Son: ch. viii. 17. The present life is but a night of watching. The night is almost gone, and will soon give place to the eternal day which, to Paul's expectant gaze, is already dawning: ch. xiii. 12.

DISSERTATION III

PAUL'S VIEW OF THE JEWISH SCRIPTURES

1. The argument of this volume is now complete. By comparison of various existing documents, we found decisive proof that the Epistle to the Romans was written or dictated by Paul, and that it is correctly reproduced in our copies. From the epistle itself we learnt that he confidently believed that Christ announced forgiveness of sins and a new life in the Spirit of God for all who put trust in Him, that He claimed to be in a unique sense the Son of God, and that in proof of this claim God raised Him from the dead. We found that this belief was shared by the various writers of the New Testament. For this unanimous belief of the early disciples of Jesus, and for its effect upon them and through them upon the world, we could find no explanation or sufficient cause except that Christ actually rose from the dead, that He actually claimed to be the Son of God, and actually announced salvation for all who put faith in Him. Thus in the documents examined, read in the light of undoubted facts, we found a full and reliable statement of the Gospel and decisive proof of the great facts on which rests the Christian hope.

Throughout our inquiry, we did not ascribe to any part of the Bible infallible or special authority. We merely accepted this epistle as written by an honest and intelligent man. Although we referred to other N.T. writings, we did not take for granted even their historic correctness, but simply accepted their unanimous testimony as proof that Paul's belief was shared by the other early disciples of Jesus. Owing to the number and variety of these witnesses, their testimony, estimated as we should estimate any other testimony, would remain unshaken, in reference to the matters discussed in this volume, even if some of their statements contradicted each other, or contradicted reliable contemporary history. For their unanimity can be accounted for only by the truth of that in which they agree.

2. At the same time, we can gather from this epistle Paul's view of the authority of the Old Testament; and we shall do well to study it.

He accepts, without a shadow of doubt, its narratives as historic fact; e.g. the story of Abraham, of Rebecca's children, of Pharaoh, of Moses at Sinai, and of Elijah: chs. iv., ix. 8, 9; *vv.* 10, 17, 15; xi. 2. In ch. v. 12—14, he calls attention to analogy resting on the story of the Fall, thus showing that he accepted that story as a correct account of the spiritual history of the early morning of our race. He accepts, in ch. iv. 3, a statement in Gen. xv. 6 of what took place in the heart of Abraham and in the mind of God, and makes it a basis of important argument. In ch. iv. 9—11, he builds an argument upon the order in time of Gen. xv. 6 and xvii. 10. Words expressly attributed to God in the O.T. are accepted by Paul as the voice of God in chs. iv. 17, 18, vii. 7, ix. 7, 9, 12, 13, 15, 17, 25, 26, 33, x. 5, 11, 13, 20, 21, xi. 4, 26, xiii. 9, xiv. 11. Of the many quotations from the Pentateuch, Paul attributes to Moses only Lev. xviii. 5, containing God's words to Moses, and Dt. xxxii. 21, from the song of Moses. We have therefore no right to say that he accepted the whole Pentateuch as written by him. Psalms xxxii. and lxix. are attributed to David: and we notice that both have superscriptions attributing them to him. Isa. i. 9, x. 22, xi. 10; liii. 1, lxv. 1 are ascribed to Isaiah; Hos. i. 10, ii. 23 to Hosea. Elsewhere the authors are not mentioned.

In all these quotations, Paul's one thought is to educe their spiritual significance, and especially their bearing on the Gospel of Christ. Every detail with this bearing is important: all else is left out of sight. This forbids us to claim Paul as asserting or assuming the historic truth of such details as have no bearing on the spiritual life; or to attempt to settle questions of O.T. authorship by casual allusions in the letters of Paul. See further on pp. 89—91 of my volume on *Galatians*.

3. Again, Paul not only receives the Old Testament as a reliable narrative of facts but accepts ordinary words of its writers as the Law of God: so ch. iii. 19, where foregoing quotations from the Psalms and the Book of Isaiah are so accepted. He thus separates the books quoted and all others which stand on the same level from all other literature as a declaration of the will of God. Just so, the written laws of a nation stand apart from its other literature. In ch. xi. 9, a prayer of David is quoted as setting forth the principles of God's moral government. In harmony with this, Paul often attributes to the O.T. writings a purpose far beyond their writer's thought: e.g. descriptions of bad men are in ch. iii. 19 said to have been spoken in order to bring the whole world silent and guilty before the bar of God. The story of Abraham was written in order to lead us to justification through faith; and the Scriptures as a whole were written for our instruction and encouragement: chs. iv. 24, xv. 4; cp. Gal. iii. 8, 22. With this agrees Paul's habit of quoting without the author's name, and quoting the O.T. as a final authority. This explains the august title given to the Jewish Scriptures in ch. i. 2, at the beginning of the epistle: *Holy Writings:* similarly 2 Tim. iii. 15, 16, *Sacred Letters . . . God-breathed.* Paul thus puts the Jewish Scriptures among the holy objects of the Old Covenant, as standing in special relation to God and thus separated from all other books. This we can now understand. If the O.T. be true, it is a record of supernatural revelations given by God to men before the coming of Christ: and, if so, its lofty spiritual tone, helpful even to the disciples of Christ, and the absence of all polytheism reveal, even in the record, the guiding hand of the Spirit of God.

From the confidence with which Paul quotes the O.T. as decisive,

we infer that these opinions were held by both his readers and opponents. This is confirmed by the fact that similar honour is paid to the Old Testament throughout the New Testament: so Jno. v. 46, 47, x. 35, Mt. xix. 7, Acts iv. 25, Heb. x. 15—17. The same honour is paid by Jewish contemporaries. So Josephus, in bk. i. 7, 8 of his work *Against Apion*, says that the O.T. was written by prophets led by an "inbreathing from God:" similarly Philo, *Life of Moses* bk. iii. 23.

The historic truthfulness of the O.T., as of the N.T., must be tested and measured by the methods of sound historic criticism. In such inquiry, we must take into calculation the harmonious account given by the O.T. writers of the civil and religious history of their race; the clear knowledge of a personal God, the Creator and Ruler of the world, the righteous and loving friend of all men, so much superior to that possessed by any other ancient people; and the glowing pictures of blessing to come, which are in part receiving fulfilment to-day in the spreading blessings of Christianity, which took its rise in Israel. In my view, the only explanation of all the facts of the case is that God, who gave to men in Christ a final revelation of His purpose of mercy, gave to Abraham and through Moses to Israel earlier revelations preparatory to the Gospel of Christ; and that in the Old and New Testaments respectively we have, by the agency of the Holy Spirit, prompting and controlling the writers, records of these revelations sufficiently extensive and accurate for the spiritual needs of men.

The above judgment may, I believe, be accepted with full confidence. But I observe with gratitude that the historic fact of the resurrection of Christ, the justice of His claim to be in a unique sense the Son of God, and the truth of the great fundamental doctrines asserted, expounded, and defended in this epistle, all which are far more important to us than the precise nature of the authority of the Bible—I observe that these rest upon evidence still broader and firmer. Consequently, our belief of the facts and doctrines of the Gospel will not be disturbed by any perplexity about the authorship of some parts of the Bible or the correctness of some of its statements.

In another volume I have expounded the Epistles to the Corinthians, which give us a wonderful picture of Paul's apostolic activity and pastoral care and of one of the churches planted by him : and in a third volume I have expounded the Epistle to the Galatians, a letter most closely related to the epistle before us, but dealing with the same topics in a more practical and personal manner. These three volumes cover the second group of Paul's letters, those written in the noonday of his apostolic activity. In a fourth volume I have expounded the Epistles to the Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and to Philemon ; all written in prison, apparently from Rome, and embodying the maturest thought of the great apostle. These two groups include four-fifths of his writings. In addition to them we have only two Epistles to the Thessalonians written much earlier than those mentioned above ; and those to Timothy and Titus, written near the close of Paul's life. These earliest and latest epistles do not modify the conception of Christ and the Gospel embodied in the epistles I have annotated. But the earlier group gives much greater prominence to the return of Christ to judge the world, and the later one to the duties of the officers of the apostolic Churches.

In these four groups of letters we have a full and permanent embodiment of Paul's conception of the Gospel and of Christ. This conception, thus recorded, is an all-important component part of the documentary evidence for the Gospel of Christ. Its infinite value reveals, in these letters of Paul to the Christians of his own day, a gift of God to His Church in all ages.

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